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McCarthy

Our book of memories

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Justin McCarthy

OUR BOOK OF MEMORIES

LETTERS OF JUSTIN McCARTHY
TO
MRS. CAMPBELL PRAED

WITH 10 ILLUSTRATIONS

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Cardinal Newman has said that the true life of a man is contained in his letters, and that 'not only for the interests of a biography, but for arriving at the inside of things, the publication of letters is the true method. Biographers [he continues] varnish, they assign motives, they conjecture feelings, they interpret Lord Burleigh's nod, but contemporary letters are facts.'

It seems to me that these words apply especially to the letters of Justin McCarthy here collected. Dashed off, red-hot—on electioneering-trips, lecture-tours, when waiting for proofs of his leading articles at the office of the *Daily News*, from an upstairs lobby in the House of Commons, and even during pauses in the passionate struggle in Committee Room Number Fifteen, at the deposition of Mr. Parnell from the leadership of the majority of the Irish Party—they are a spontaneous presentation of the man himself. And, to my thinking, the charm of that unconscious self-presentation lies in the fact that never a word, whether penned in elation or despondency, shows the nature and acts of the man to have been other than faithful to his highest principles.

The correspondence is, of course, mainly personal—a record of intellectual sympathies in our literary co-partnership, of the social life of London, so far as we moved in it, and of the more intimate life of the House of Commons

to which Mr. McCarthy opened the door for me by our collaboration in certain political novels.

It is in that personal element that the chief difficulty lies of editing these letters and supplying explanatory links. For to leave out the personal would have been to mutilate the letters and destroy their value as a human document.

And it is not my aim to give here a picture of the historian, novelist, politician, whom the outside world knew. I am afraid I could not do that, if I wished, for Justin McCarthy had made his mark long before we first met. What I want to try to portray in these pages is something of the inner man, as he revealed himself in his letters to me, and as I found him during the many years of our comradeship—always the man of noble ideals: the most chivalric of gentlemen, the most loyal of friends.

Naturally, in this regard, a sense of responsibility weighs upon me, and I can only hope it will be recognised that, though I may have failed in some respects to carry out the purpose of this work, I have done my best to prove worthy of my old friend and literary colleague's trust, shown in his having given me the right to publish his portion of the contents of this Book of Memories, which we had originally planned to produce together.

One other word I would add: and that is to ask for indulgence should error have crept in concerning the right order of events dealt with in the letters. It has been extremely difficult when going over a mass of correspondence, much of it written on the spur of the moment, and often undated save for the day of the week, to keep things always in their proper sequence. Again I can only say that I have done my best.

R. M. PRAED.

KENSINGTON,
September 16, 1912.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	Master and Pupil	1
II.	The Great Opportunity	31
III.	Across the Atlantic	51
IV.	From the Cars	66
V.	'The Yearning Eighties'	84
VI.	Urged to Resign	113
VII.	More Speechmaking	125
VIII.	Anonymous Collaboration	142
IX.	Mostly Theatrical	157
X.	From Africa to St. Stephen's	170
XI.	London and Cannes	190
XII.	The Blue Land	207
XIII.	Dreams and Realities	223
XIV.	An Interlude	241
XV.	The Parnell Tragedy	255
XVI.	Broken Threads	274
XVII.	A Warning	287
XVIII.	From a Sick Room	307
XIX.	Making an Administration	320
XX.	A Difficult Team	332
XXI.	In Sight of the Goal	345

CHAPTER		PAGE
XXII.	The Second Home Rule Bill	357
XXIII.	The Goal Missed	371
XXIV.	A Girdle Round the Earth	385
XXV.	Closing the Political Chapter	404
XXVI.	The Veiled Visitant	414
XXVII.	A World of Dull, Grey Shadows	427
XXVIII.	'Upon Him hath the Light Shined'	437
	Appendix	448
	Index	451

ILLUSTRATIONS

Portrait of Mr. Justin McCarthy — *to face Title-page*
By Alfred Ellis & Walery.

Chester House, Northamptonshire — *to face p.* 14

Portrait of Mrs. Campbell Praed — 51
From a Painting by the late Joseph Jopling.

Mr. Justin McCarthy — 70
Photographed in Boston, 1886.

Facsimile of Letter from Mr. McCarthy to Mrs. Campbell Praed — 154

Woodlands, Hertfordshire — 293
From a Painting by John Watkins Chapman.

Mr. McCarthy in his Study at Eaton Terrace — 331
By the London Stereoscopic Company.

Mrs. Campbell Praed — 427
By Kate Pragnell.

Mr. McCarthy in his Study at Westgate-on-Sea — 433
By Reginald Haines.

Portrait with Inscription of Mr. McCarthy — 442
By Reginald Haines.

OUR BOOK OF MEMORIES

CHAPTER I

MASTER AND PUPIL

It was the spring of 1884. I had just come back to London after wintering at Cannes, and was handed an invitation to dine, a few evenings later, at the London house of our Northamptonshire friends, Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Sartoris. With the invitation, my husband delivered a mysterious message from our host. There was a pleasant surprise in store for me; Mr. Sartoris had invited, as the guest of honour, a distinguished literary man for whose works he knew I had a special admiration.

Thus, on that memorable evening, as the last guests were announced, there advanced, in a short-sighted manner, a slenderly built gentleman of modest mien, with a massive head and intellectual forehead, from which the reddish-grey hair rolled back in a sort of leonine wave—all of the conventional lion that there was about Justin McCarthy. He wore a pince-nez: his manner was quiet and very courteous: he spoke in a soft voice with the slightest touch of brogue, and, during the talk at dinner, revealed himself in unobtrusive fashion as a highly polished, travelled and agreeable man of the world. He had just come from Egypt

where he had fallen in with the son of our host, and, speaking of antiquities, showed us two fine Alexanders fastening his shirt cuffs, which he had seen dug up at some recent excavations. The unassuming gentleman had already made his great literary success in 'The History of Our Own Times,' and had, most people said, injured his reputation by entering Parliament as a member of the Irish Party under the leadership of Mr. Parnell. Indeed, it was the way in certain circles to express poignant regret that Mr. Justin McCarthy should have sacrificed a splendid literary career to become the political champion of an unpopular cause.

'A man must fight under his own flag' was one of Mr. McCarthy's favourite sayings. Certainly he fought nobly under his country's standard, and it must be admitted that but for his efforts the battle of Home Rule for Ireland would never have gone so near the winning. Whether it was ever worth the winning is a question of opinion. Whether it will ever be really won remains for history to show.

Justin McCarthy was a patriot in the truest sense of the word. That many of his world considered him a mistaken one makes no difference in the fact of his disinterested devotion to his national cause, nor lessens the nobility of his self-sacrifice. It only deepens the tragedy.

Out of that meeting arose, not so very long afterwards, our literary collaboration. Mr. McCarthy believed that there was still something to be done with the political novel, notwithstanding the popular idea that it needs a Disraeli to make parliamentary debates interesting in fiction, and that the general public—Thackeray's 'Great Big Stupid'—would have none of them. For myself I welcomed the experiment.

Besides, I was then in ardent sympathy with the Nationalist ideal. Having been brought up under a colonial system of Home Rule, it was difficult for me to understand

why Ireland should not have her Parliament and manage her own affairs. Perhaps I think a little differently now, but that's no matter. At this time, I was quite willing to be enrolled under the Irish banner.

The writing of our political novels made it necessary for me to study the activities of the House of Commons, from every standpoint available to an outsider, for planning the scenery of the story, arranging the exits and entrances of its chief characters and the general stage effects. To me it was a renewal, in fuller and more vital measure, of the old political flavouring of my Australian girlhood when I had often spent hours in the Ladies' Gallery of the House of Legislature listening to debates on which hung the fate of a Ministry, and my own poor little immediate fate as well—the retirement again into Bush cloisterdom, or the enjoyment of a season in town. That past experience was like a rehearsal in the provinces by an untrained company of the great Empire drama. *This* was the real thing, the Big Play, performed in the metropolitan theatre by the original actors.

In those days of the House of Commons, there were not the tiresome restrictions which have prevailed since the Female Suffragists made precautions necessary against feminine entrance.

A woman, under the wing of her special law-maker, might loiter in the Inner Lobby, might stand on the perch outside the sacred, brazen doors, and watch what was going on in the Debating Chamber. She might pass through the long Library—though not for an instant might she sit down therein except under condign penalty: she might walk along the upstairs lobbies—where Mr. McCarthy showed me the special desk at which so many of his letters to me were penned: she might roam the vestibules, study the frescoes, be shown the windows on the great staircase, beneath

which the standard weights and measures of England are embedded. She might be taken past the historic statues into the Great Hall of Westminster where Warren Hastings was impeached and down which, at former coronations, the Champion of England rode. She might pace the cloistral-like garden beside the House of Lords, might, upon certain days, inspect that hallowed chamber. And then, after quite an excursion, she would find herself taking tea on the Terrace —to my mind the most fascinating part of the whole business.

The Terrace was less crowded and the company more select in the eighties than I have since known it. Tea and strawberries in June upon the Terrace of the House of Commons was, among the political set, one of the pleasantest features of London life. These loiterings and explorations generally took place when the debates were not expected to be lively or when no seat had been procured for the Ladies' Gallery. It was not difficult to get one in the beginning of our collaboration. Later, the increased demand obliged members to ballot for their lady-guests. It was the simplest thing in the world to drive down to the inner courtyard, go through the small door and climb the rather steep and gloomy staircase which led to the Ladies' Gallery. Sometimes I would meet Mr. Gladstone on that staircase, escorting Mrs. Gladstone up to her place, usually in the Speaker's Gallery : and, almost before I recognised him in the dimness of the staircase, would receive the kindly greeting he invariably stopped to give me on our chance encounters. Then, to slip into the front row behind the *grille*—if one were lucky—where, by and by, Mr. McCarthy would find me and explain the debate and who was going to speak and what was likely to happen down below. I learned a good deal about party intrigue and parliamentary underplay from my literary colleague, who would talk to me *en bon camarade*

about the latest political developments and his own hopes and disappointments and perplexities.

He was one of the few men who believe in the trustworthiness of women as confidantes and even counsellors to their male relatives and friends. It was on his principle of bringing out the best in everybody that he brought out in women sterling qualities they are cynically supposed to lack. In one of his letters long afterward he expresses himself on this point.

'You know I don't go in, any more than you would, for making dolls and pets of women—for feeding them metaphorically on sugar plums and treating them as if they were odalisques. No. I like a woman to be a man's companion, to be his comrade: to be able to comfort and soothe him when he needs soothing—and the strongest man does need a woman's soothing and does get strength from her in his turn, even as he gives her strength.'

So, as the years went on, he let me more and more into the inner workings of his political and literary life, and there grew up the pile of letters which make the bulk of this 'Book of Memories.' As will be seen, he himself suggested the title and chose the portrait reproduced as a frontispiece to the work, which in truth I may describe as the story of one of those rare literary friendships between a man and a woman that would seem to produce a deeper and more sterling satisfaction than companionship of any other kind. In the present instance, Justin McCarthy's character and temperament lent themselves to the formation of such a friendship. The fine chivalry and simple sincerity of his nature and the proverbial Irish delicacy of mind—so marked a feature in him—as well as a certain feminine strain that one finds in a particular type of intellectual man—made our comradeship specially agreeable and beneficial. In truth, it held nothing but good for me and mine.

Taking stock, now that I am growing old, of the mental equipment I have laid up for future years, it becomes clear to me that I owe the greater part of such store to my association with Justin McCarthy. It was a fortunate chance for me that some little time before the dinner at Mr. Sartoris' he should have been attracted by some promise that he found in 'Nadine'—one of my early novels—and should then, he has since told me, have formed the wish that he might help and direct me in future work. 'Master and pupil,' in his own words, we became—all the better master and the more docile pupil in that he had over her the advantage of more than twenty years of experience. He would correct, always gently and kindly, my faults of style, he taught me to appreciate the best books, to understand something of the Elizabethans, Goethe, and Schiller, of the Latin poets and Greek dramatists—even though for me only in translations.

I fancy he had a sort of fellow-sympathy with an inquiring mind that had run riot in the Bush, without any educational opportunities save those provided by Nature and a number of bookcases filled with miscellaneous literature. He himself, though he had gone to school in Cork in the ordinary way, had fed his mind mainly upon books. I have heard him tell bitterly how the fact of his being a Catholic had debarred him from taking honours at a university and made it useless for him to go to college. Yet, I remember well—if I may quote from one of the most distinguished of university men—Lord Justice Fletcher Moulton telling me that he considered Justin McCarthy the best all-round scholar he knew.

It was delightful to work under a master who, whatever subject we touched, was always able to throw upon it some fresh and romantic light. For he was essentially a romancist and used to maintain that history can only be

told truly by one who regards it as a magnificent human romance.

The idea of the 'Book of Memories' came after we had written our three novels in collaboration, when Mr. McCarthy suggested that we might collaborate pleasurably in a volume of personal impressions about politics, literature, and London life of the eighties and early nineties, to be published at a much later date, after the dramatic period of Mr. Parnell's fight for Home Rule should have ended—as seemed likely enough then—in the Nationalist triumph and a parliament on College Green. The sort of book which it would have been a delight to work at with him, but in which my part must necessarily have been a minor one. But the 'Book of Memories,' as originally planned, was never written. Our collaboration had to give way to more strenuous claims. The letters tell their own tale of overstrain and the difficulty of reconciling leadership of the Irish Party with the necessity for making an income by literature. Then came the breakdown in health and Mr. McCarthy's complete withdrawal from public life, and, what was worst of all, the failure of eyesight which for years made him practically dependent upon a secretary. Thus, even our correspondence dwindled, and the charming letters which had for so long reflected, almost day by day, my old friend's moods and doings, became fewer and pitifully brief.

Our literary collaboration began in the summer of 1885. My husband and I were spending that summer with our children at a quaint old farmhouse near Wellingborough in Northamptonshire, and here Mr. McCarthy paid us frequent visits.

The farmhouse was called Chester House, and was built on the site of a Roman encampment. All about it were Roman relics—bits of pottery, tiles, mosaic, defaced carvings

and mounds of oyster shells that had once furnished food for ancient Roman epicures. On the edge of the little garden-terrace stood two stone coffins, gruesome mementoes of dead Roman warriors, and there was even a legend of the ghost of an ancient Roman—a mailed soldier, said to appear sometimes at twilight—though I never heard of anybody who had seen him. The place had an odd picturesqueness of its own, standing, as it did, above the valley of the River Nene, the town of Wellingborough poeticised by distance, mistily visible on the one side, and the beautiful old steeple of Higham Ferrers Church rising two or three miles away on the other. In dry summer weather the Nene meandered placidly between rushy banks, through meadows filled with water-daisies and meadow-sweet. But in autumn, when the rains came and the waters were out, that smiling Nene valley became as a roaring sea, and the wind, swooping fiercely down it, made a wild onslaught upon the exposed front of the house. Across the river, opposite the terrace, there was an iron foundry, and the tall chimney, belching flame, made a picturesque effect at night. Then, too, the express trains, crossing a long railway bridge, would flash upon the horizon line, leaving a fiery trail, like the tail of an enormous comet, coming out of the dark unknown, to disappear again into unknown blackness. One saw gorgeous sunsets from the small terrace, red as the fiery trail of the trains and the rising flames of the foundry. Though the landscape had but the commonplace features of a scene in the Midlands, there was something about it dreamy and un-English, especially in the late afternoon, when a soft haze crept over the valley. And the river, a pale winding stream with an occasional barge or boat, gliding between the rushes, caught glints from the dying sunshine and looked more a river of imagination than of reality. And when the wind tossed the pollard willows along the banks

showing the undersides of their branches, one seemed carried by fancy far away, and to be seeing the olive trees of the South turn silvery grey by the passing of the mistral.

I remember a stretch of the little Nene below the terrace of Chester House, of which Mr. McCarthy was very fond, and where we often strolled when planning the novel. On a grey autumn day there was something curiously weird about the expanse of meadow through which the stream meandered, cold, misty, partly covered with slime : but, where there was no weed, with all the reflections distinct and showing almost black upon the slaty water.

An old red-brick mill stood upon a dreary looking tongue of land, where the river divides—a little peninsula in dry weather, with twisted pollard willows and tall reeds. Well do I recollect my colleague's delight with the scene the first time he walked to the Mill, and his saying how it appealed to a certain melancholy strain in his own temperament. It was the first time he spoke to me of those ' pools of melancholy ' into which he was wont to fall, and to which afterwards he alluded in his letters.

That old house—tempting one to irrelevant lingering—must have had a history, but the county chronicle tells almost nothing of it. Immense cellars, with a well of beautiful clear water in one of them, extended from the house beneath the terrace, whence an underground passage, blocked now with rubbish, was said by tradition to pass under the river and to connect the house with the remains of a monastic building at Higham Ferrers ; and, after we gave up the place, there was discovered in the oldest part a secret chamber which had evidently been used as a priest's hiding-place.

At Chester House we schemed out our first collaboration-novel, ' The Right Honourable,' arranging the portions of the story and the characters for which Mr. McCarthy or I proposed, in the first rough draft, to make ourselves

responsible. Afterwards, each took over and wrote into the part that the other had thus begun.

But however interesting a literary experiment may be to the persons engaged upon it, long dissertations upon people in a book and upon the methods of producing a novel in collaboration would naturally bore the general reader. So in culling from Mr. McCarthy's letters during the summer of 1885 free use has been made of the blue pencil.

This is one of the first.

15 Ebury Street, Midnight.

'My dear Mrs. Praed,—As you have given me permission and as I am here at home close to my type-writer, I avail myself of it, and I think your eyesight will be none the worse for getting a letter printed off thus and not written in my dreadful handwriting. . . . I like your general idea of a plot for our story very much. I shall suggest some alterations in detail that we can talk over, but I think we cannot get anything better than your general idea—the story of an ambitious man who is willing in the end to sacrifice everything to the sweet wild-flower girl. . . . Why should she not in the end fly, not *with* him but *from* him, and he turn back to his darkening life of mere ambition and try to feed himself on that? A sort of '*On ne badine pas avec l'amour*,' don't you think,—'Sooner or later, Love is his own avenger.' We will talk it all over. I am getting many ideas about it. . . . Gladly, gladly do I welcome the idea of 'master and pupil.' I shall not be a *very* hard master, but I shall do with you as I do with myself: try to bring out what is best. . . .

'I look forward with delight to the prospect of working in literary companionship with you. I take your friendship on its conditions, and I prize it.

'I have been very busy and have also been going out to places a good deal. I have my two House of Commons' Committees going on. When I go down to you, I shall have, I think, some political news for you from Dublin. I have had a letter from there to-day which will perhaps interest you to see: only you must not let me bore you with politics.'

The news from Dublin referred to what has been called

'the Carnarvon Incident.' I had happened to be in Mr. McCarthy's study one day discussing with him our collaboration, when he was summoned to see a mysterious caller, and on his return told me, perhaps as a test of my discretion, the mission of the caller—a preliminary to that famous meeting of Mr. Parnell and Lord Carnarvon to discuss the possibility of the Tories bringing in a measure for Home Rule.

That summer of 1885 was seething with political intrigues, in which the settlement of the Irish Question took the prominent place. For the new Reform Bill had opened to Ireland the door of Home Rule. Some eighty Nationalist members had been elected for parliament and were sworn under the banner of Parnell. The state of parties gave them power to dip the scale on one side or the other. Mr. Parnell was in the position of a player at a game of chess, in which he had only to make a move in order to checkmate his adversary. With Tories and Liberals it was a question of a bid for office; but the Tories made it clear, after entering on negotiations, that the price asked was too high to pay; while, later, Mr. Gladstone presented a more logical reason for his after-change of view. Ireland had received the extension of franchise: she had spoken her demand in no uncertain voice, and it was the duty of an English constitutional statesman to give heed to the national utterance. But all this is ancient history, and, save for a certain aim at artistic wholeness in these memories, it would seem presumptuous to touch on political matters with which historians and biographers have already so fully dealt.

To myself, just launched upon our collaboration, interest in the 'political playbill'—to use my literary colleague's phrase—was thrilling and inexhaustible. I have a vivid recollection of the excitement at that time, at London dinner-tables, and of the modest satisfaction with which Mr. McCarthy described to me how the body of Nationalists had

marched into the Division Lobby behind the Tories and been the means of turning out Mr. Gladstone's Government by a majority of fourteen.

So, from the end of June to August 14, the Irish Party held the Conservatives in power, and during that period went on the famous Carnarvon negotiations, for revealing which, in the House of Commons, Mr. Parnell was afterwards so much blamed. Outside Conservatives steadily refused to believe in the possibility of any such negotiations with the Irish leader, but, even at the time, several interested people were aware that in the summer of 1885 a gentleman, designated in the correspondence as 'Mr. Smith,' crossed to Dublin for the purpose of holding an interview with one in high authority at that place.

Lord Randolph Churchill, in a letter to Lord Salisbury, dated December 22, '85,[1] and published in Mr. Winston Churchill's life of his father, corroborates the following extract from a letter of Mr. McCarthy's to me referring to a conversation he had had with Lord Carnarvon. Mr. McCarthy writes:

'I don't think that much will come of our talk with "our mutual friend." He is willing and anxious to go as far, he says, as I could wish to go, but he fears that his party would not be prepared just at present to go so far, and I fear the

[1] Lord Randolph says: 'Labouchere came to see me . . . to ask what we are going to do. . . . Then I was very much upset for he proceeded to tell me that on Sunday week last Lord Carnarvon had met Justin McCarthy and confided to him that he was in favour of Home Rule in some shape, but that his colleagues and his party were not ready. and asked whether Justin McCarthy's party would agree to an enquiry which he thought there was a chance of the Government agreeing to and which would educate his colleagues and his party if granted and carried through. I was consternated, but replied that such a statement was an obvious lie: but between ourselves I fear it is not—perhaps not even an exaggeration or misrepresentation. Justin McCarthy is on the staff of the *Daily News*, Labouchere is one of the proprietors, and I cannot imagine any motive for his inventing such a statement. If it is true, then Lord Carnarvon has played the devil.'—From the *Life of Lord Randolph Churchill.*

result will be that the Grand Old Man will come in. I thought you and Campbell would like to know this, and so I write you this line. We had a long talk.'

I continue to glean from the summer of 1885 :

'Please be diffusive with me, and concentrated, if you like, with anybody or everybody else. I shall be only too delighted to act as a safety-valve. In good truth, you can reckon with perfect confidence on my sympathetic regard and interest. I like very much the idea of beginning our joint novel as soon as "Camiola" is done. I will get "Camiola" out of hand as soon as possible, and will then go down to you at once. Then we shall frame our plot and clear the ground. I have lots of things to talk to you about. . . .

'I am perplexed about my villain, and I think that I had better put off my visit to you till you have finished your book and I have got through with "Camiola." Then we could meet with relieved and irresponsible minds. I shall be delighted to see you in your country home—with your blue china!'

The last in joking allusion to two old cracked blue jars which I had proudly picked up for a few shillings on an occasion when we had been walking together. He goes on, after complaining wearily of the heat in London and the dragging of the Season :

'I would I were a travelling tinker. Then I would ramble through fields down to Northamptonshire and mend all your kettles for you and perhaps even the blue china might want to be soldered together.' June, '85.

Then I find him criticising proofs of a story of mine while, at his desire, I am putting a feminine touch to his novel 'Camiola.' He asks :

'Will you do me a favour? Will you write for me a few lines describing my Camiola dressed for Mrs. Pollens' great party? . . .

'I return your proofs. There was very little to alter. I shall keep my eye on your Irishman, and will even take the

liberty of giving him an Irish touch here and there. I shall try to find several faults when I see you next—to be quite the stern critic in fact and to show how much cleverer I am myself than anyone else could possibly be. In good truth, if I should see any serious defects, I shall not fail to tell you of them.'

July, '85. 'My dear Colleague in Literature,—I wonder if you have yet started our venture. . . . I have not yet been able to begin as I meant to do this day. The House sat until after five o'clock this morning. . . . I did not get to bed till nearly seven—about the time when you were getting your letters and your early tea!—and the result was that I got up late, had to keep an engagement at two and got to the House at four, felt dazed, cross, dull, morose, disagreeable and got nothing done in the way of fiction. Nor can I to-morrow I fear, for I am expecting some important business at the House, which meets at twelve. I had wild hopes of running down to you to-morrow, but they are vanishing. . . . '

July, '85. 'My dear Colleague,—Yes, I think we must make the political movement a sort of centre or pivot in our story so that though not a political story, it shall be a story revolving round a centre of political action. The betrayal of some secret connected with it must be accomplished in some way. I must think out some very strong thing for the treachery—something new, not melodramatic and yet striking and sufficient. I have not got to it yet: but I shall get to it: it will come to me some time. Then I shall see my way. . . . Not much however will be done by me till the House is up.'

'I wonder have you got that pretty opening picture well in hand yet. I am charmed with the light on the girl's face. It shall be symbolic as well as real "the light that never was on sea or land." By it her destiny is read in advance. . . . Our story must have thrilling contrasts as all life has. We must have lots about London, even about its skies. . . . I have in my mind a charming picture of that look-out from your terrace-walk over the broad plain beneath—with, at night, that flame which we saw on the far horizon. It was very picturesque and poetical.'

July, '85. My dear Colleague and Companion,—I hope you were not quite too wearied by our ranging of the Healtheries in

quest of the Holy Grail—I mean of course the perfection of type-writers. . . .

'. . . I had my private interview with the Chancellor of the Exchequer [1] about two o'clock this morning, and another this evening. There is something bordering on the picturesque in this idea of a private interview with a Minister of State at two in the morning, but it wasn't any great State secret—only about a commercial crisis in the south of Ireland and I only tell you of it to give you a notion of the sort of thing our hero has to do.'

'Yesterday was the first Saturday I think since the season began when I did not go anywhere. Your place must look charming to-day, and what a sunset you are likely to have! I am tired with the season and the session and filled with a silly impatient longing for both to be actually over. I wish "Camiola" were finished. Now that I know how it is to end, the rest is mere formality. Am I not grumbling? Forgive me. July, '85.

'. . . I am so glad that you like to hear what I am doing and by the way, you are not an outsider in my life, but very much of an insider. I shall soon have to go to the House of Commons where Parnell and I and one or two others of our party are to have a private conference with two dignitaries of the Irish Catholic Church on the question of education, colleges, and universities in Ireland. We are to have a long debate on the subject in the House of Commons to-morrow and I shall have to speak—at least I fear I shall. And I do so hate public speaking: especially in the House of Commons—and Parnell hates it even more I think: and yet one has to do it. . . . The other dinner I attended was one given by Parnell to a distinguished American politician now in London who is in sympathy with us. The only social enjoyment Parnell has, so far as I know, is a dinner of this sort given to his own personal and political friends, and he is a most charming host. I don't know how it is but he has in his manners as a host the sweetness of a woman as well as the strength of a curiously cold, self-contained, masculine nature. July, '85.

'I have been burdened by Lady Dorothy Nevill with the fearful responsibility of a birthday book of hers, in which

[1] The Right Hon. Hugh Childers.

there are some names of inestimable value to her and which could not be got again: Lord Beaconsfield's for instance, and Victor Hugo's and others: and I am to get Parnell's name for her—and I have to carry it down to the House of Commons—and if I should lose it or he should lose it, what would have to be done!

'Last night O'Connor's pretty little American wife came to see us. I think I told you of this dear, bright, little woman and their romantic marriage. I was their confidant all through and I gave her away at the marriage. She created a sort of little sensation at Mrs. Jeune's the other night . . . I close with some words the refrain of a song I used to hear long ago in the Southern States of America sung by the negroes and of which I am reminded by one of Mrs. O'Connor's songs—"And may the world go well with you!"'

July, '85. 'The cistern of your mind is brimful of ideas. That idea about *Lady Betty*[1] is excellent. . . . *Koorali*[1] must be a woman with moods. One of *Morse's*[1] turn of mind could not be really and deeply interested in a woman who was always just the same. . . . There is all the difference between a lake and a tank don't you see?—the lake with its ever varying surface: its incessant reflections: its shadows—its moons: its poetic varieties and subtleties—the other piece of water always still, clear, valuable, useful and uninteresting—you understand what I mean don't you? We must shew this in the two women.'

July, '85. 'I got here in good time and went to the *Daily News* and came home again and wrote a leading article, and now I begin some correspondence, of which my letter to you is the only part that has a personal interest for me. The rest of the correspondence consists chiefly of answers to invitations to public meetings in Ireland and suchlike. One curious letter however, that I find, contains absolutely nothing written, but a highly gorgeous handkerchief of soft silk. A kind of flame colour and dark yellow and crimson intermingled and ornamented all over with sections in gold of the willow-patterned plate! No word to say why or from whom I get this singular representation.

'. . . We are to have an important meeting of our M.P.'s in Dublin. . . . You will read with interest Lord Carnarvon's

[1] Characters in *The Right Honourable.*

speech. I did not hear it and the reports in the evening papers are very imperfect. But I am told that it was very satisfactory and was quite explicit in its declaration in favour of Home Rule, and the Gladstonians are jubilant about it. Now they say, we have the two latest Irish viceroys—a Liberal and a Tory—Spencer and Carnarvon—equally pledged to Home Rule. . . .

'. . . I had luncheon at Mrs. J.'s to-day: I had a long talk with her after about politics and Lord Carnarvon's prospects and plans. . . . Goodbye, "The elements be kind to thee and make thy spirits all of comfort."'

House of Commons, July, '85.

'Midnight comes in with a very solemn sound like the tolling of a deep-toned bell. But midnight, after all, is early and we are only in the beginning of our evening's entertainment. I leave them to debate below. I hear voices and even words up here while I am writing to you. Saturday week I am to begin my canvass, or at least my holding of meetings in Liverpool. I do not know if H—— will accompany me. There are bonds stronger than cart ropes that sometimes hold a youth in London. Ah! "Wait till you come to forty years!" You know Thackeray's exquisite little half-sad, half-cynical song? But much of the beauty of the song is that you know the singer is only coquetting with his forty years and that his heart, bless you! is as full of fire as it ever was. Forty years indeed! Forty years seems to me the very flush and heyday of youth! I pass from that subject. It becomes painful and personal!'

July, '85.

'I am writing to you from one of the lobbies "upstairs" according to our phrase here. The place has become associated in my mind with you because it is from here that I usually write to you. If you will come to the House some day before business begins I will shew you the spot. I reached home in good time to put my question in the House. Our debate is going on, but it was preceded by another and wholly unexpected debate—in the House of Commons, the unforeseen always occurs, and yet always surprises us when it does occur. I spoke in both: in the unexpected one I think I spoke well: in the expected poorly. I felt strongly in the first: was tired, and felt not much in the second. In the first too, the House was crowded and excited; in the second, it was worn out and nearly empty.'

July, '85. 'I have finished "Camiola"! and am going to send it off. Well, it is done—and as *Mr. Phoebus* says in "Lothair" "to-morrow it will go to the critics"—and if they don't speak well of it, I shall say they are right. Then I shall get to the House of Commons and begin to look into the subjects on which we are to debate to-night and to which I have not yet had time to turn even a thought. I send you a fairly good report of my speech, which appeared in a Dublin paper, along with that part of Bright's speech which made allusion to me and which caused me to reply. I had no intention of saying a word on the subject until he referred to me. We were great friends once, but he quarrelled with me because I opposed Gladstone's Coercion policy and we had never exchanged a word or even a salute for four years. It was his quarrel altogether—not mine. I never find fault with anyone for his political opinions. But I could not stand being thus suddenly taken up after having been suddenly dropped down—and that was why I spoke.' [1]

[1] The debate here mentioned was upon a question of privilege raised by Mr. Callan, an Irish member, with regard to a recent speech of Mr. John Bright's, in which the Irish members had been denounced as 'rebels of a boundless sympathy with criminals and murderers.'

In justifying himself and limiting the scope of his accusation, Mr. Bright spoke of 'my honourable friend the member for Longford (Mr. Justin McCarthy) whom I have known for many years,' adding, 'I do not believe he is a rebel.'

According to the ruling of the Speaker, Mr. Bright then withdrew while the debate proceeded.

Mr. Justin McCarthy, replying, said that he regretted the rules of the House compelled the right honourable gentleman to withdraw, as for many reasons, some of them personal, he should prefer that the right honourable gentleman were present to hear the few observations he had to make. Mr. McCarthy deprecated the motion of Mr. Callan and said that personally he was not fond of appealing to the judgment of the House—which he knew to be, in the main, hostile—for the vindication of the honour of Irish members. He would much rather leave the question to a future and a wiser time when passion and prejudice would not rage so strongly as at the present moment. Referring to Mr. Bright, he went on to say that there had been a time when a word of censure or question of his motives by the right honourable gentleman, member for Birmingham, would have affected him deeply and caused him the severest pain. That was in the days when the right honourable gentleman showed himself the friend of Ireland, when he had told him (J. McC——) that, were he in his place, he (Mr. Bright) would fight much more strongly and go much further. . . . But a change—perhaps an unconscious change—had come over the right honourable gentleman. From the time his party had come into office, he had left the path and

'I am sending you, my dear colleague, what I am confidently assured is the very pearl, pink and paragon of pens—with ink to correspond—and to correspond with. . . . What sweet and touching and poetic things that pen, I know, is destined to write! And it will have sometimes to write to *me*. Upstairs Lobby. Friday Night.

'This is in fact a sort of little farewell. We go to Liverpool to-morrow. Won't you write me a line or two there to brighten my prosaic exile? . . . I hope you like my little additions to the *Koorali* chapter. I begin to see our way and it gladdens me—and so goodbye for a little.'

'I have just come back (from Liverpool) without having received a single brickbat. We had a huge meeting—but no—I am not Mr. —— I won't tell you how many people were there. Aug. '85.

'You can easily think what a pleasure it was to me to get your letter in Liverpool! It was as if you came and said "I know you are tired of the crowd and the speechmaking and the incessant talking to all manner of people, and so I have come to draw you aside for a moment while I say a word to you."

'. . . I am greatly taken with your *parvenue*. Could we not bring in a modified sketch of her? I should like to crowd the background (of our novel) with more or less eccentric figures . . . the striking forms of our hero and heroine with their high, ill-fated hearts moving through this crowd, separated and yet in a sense together, and at heart isolated from the rest. . . . I shall try to think of one or two odd figures to add to the collection.

'I have been at work at *Lady Betty's* party in "The Right Honourable." I had only an hour to give to it, and did only four or five of the typewritten pages, and those not all

renounced the principles he had previously followed in regard to Ireland. From that time, he, who had denounced coercion, had become impatient of opposition to coercive measures and had become the enemy of Ireland. Mr. McCarthy added that as the right honourable gentleman had done him the honour of alluding to him as a friend and of saying that he did not believe him (Mr. McCarthy) to be a rebel though a member of a rebel party, he would say that the friendship of the right honourable gentleman was one he had once been proud of: but of late years that appeal did not awaken so strong an echo as it might once have done. . . . He concluded by asking 'What did the charge of rebel imply?' He believed that he was amply justified in being a member of a rebel party, seeking by peaceful agitation to overthrow a system which he knew to be bad.

connected or consecutive, but, after my fashion, a scrap of this and a scrap of that to be afterwards got into form and welded together somehow. I have just started a new character, but I don't know yet who he is to be. So I stopped off there as I had to come down to the House, and I trust to being inspired with some knowledge about him before I next go to work. . . .

'Is it a lucky thing or an unlucky thing for you and me that we neither of us fall in love with our own books, but composedly look them in the face and find out all their defects and comment on them? I know so many authors who do really admire their own books and can't see any faults in them: and I suppose they are very happy thereby. I enclose three pages of dialogue. I don't know if it is the right sort of thing but should like you to put in a background and to group the picture. You can do that better than I can.'

Aug. '85. 'I am so sorry, very dear colleague, that I can't go to Irchester to-day, but an accumulation of things political makes it impossible for me to get out of town. . . .

On Sunday I have to go to Dublin to attend a dinner given there on Monday in honour of Parnell which will be an affair of some political importance: we have all manner of political conferences on hand. I am to preside at the dinner. I enclose, as it may perhaps interest you—even as an autograph—a line just received from the redoubtable Tim Healy—Roaring Tim, as *Punch* calls him—why, I don't know—the ablest young man—under thirty a good way—now in public life and one of the foremost debaters in the House of Commons. I also enclose two cuttings from the *Daily News*—a light article of mine about American publishers and Lord Tennyson, and an extract from some account of Richmond Races in which you will find the name of a horse taken from a heroine of yours! Shew it to Campbell, it will interest him.'

Dublin, Aug. 24, '85. '. . . Our dinner comes off to-night and I am to propose the health of our Chief. I don't mean to oppress myself by even thinking about it till it has to be done. To-day we—the Irish members—were photographed in a group. To-morrow I am to be photographed—a panel affair. I begin to feel for professional beauties being photographed so often. But I suppose they like it! . . .

'We dined at a friend's house last night. Parnell was

there. Our friend's house is not far from the hotel and some of us walked home in the broad moonlit streets. Parnell and C—— led the way. He had with him a great setter dog, a huge creature which he is taking to his country place and which had to be led by a chain.[1] So they went on, Parnell's tall form attracting the attention of some belated wanderer who looked back and murmured "Why it's Mr. Parnell himself!" I received an offer from America about lectures. The person who sends it is a Colonel Morse—Bram Stoker's friend. There is another agency also urging me—people recommended by Matthew Arnold. . . .

'I have been interrupted by a stream of callers, Dr. Kevin O'Doherty amongst them, to whom I gave your address. To-morrow we have two meetings: Wednesday, one. I shall have to make no end of speeches. How glad I shall be to get to your place. You don't want any speeches made to you! I am looking with eagerness to my visit—like a child wild for holiday.'

'We travelled at night. We left Dublin steeped in unwonted sunlight and find London steeped in drenching rain—only one cloud in the sky and that one cloud covering the whole sky. I hope the heavens are brighter with you. London, Aug. 27, '85.

'I have just been interviewed by the representative of the other American agency. I am perplexed in the extreme. Somehow I wish they did put off the elections until January. That would save one the trouble of thinking out the American trip for this year.'

'I returned from your place in the spirit of the unwilling schoolboy going back to his books. Of course it rained, as Campbell will tell you. Whenever one is returning from a place where he liked to be, it is sure to be raining miserably. I had a very pleasant time, but then—as *Tristram*[2] would say—"that goes without saying." . . . I enclose three pages of conversation. . . . I daresay we can put it into shape between us. I would do more, only that I have been writing a leading article, and it is getting late.' London, Aug. 31, '85.

'I got to town in good time to accomplish my leading article. Fancy the amount of instruction conferred on the public by one who seizes the first subject he can think of and Sept. '85.

[1] Parnell's famous red setter, Grouse.

[2] A character in Mr. McCarthy's novel *Maid of Athens*.

pours out any reflections that occur to him on the spur of the moment with the feeling that, after all, it doesn't matter much, for nobody will read it. That is, I assure you, the spirit in which a great many leading articles are written every day, and yet, with a lifetime of experience, I positively feel annoyed sometimes when I read some leading articles on the Irish Question, in which it is evident to my mind that the writer does not know what he is writing about. As if I knew what I was writing about yesterday when I was enlightening the British Public—" Oh British Public, who may love me yet—Marry and Amen ! "—on the Eastern Question !

' I send you a contribution to your autograph collection, if you make anything of the kind that takes its interest from politics. It is a letter from Parnell which relates to a subscription made up at his suggestion for a very deserving Irishman who has ruined his business and his prospects for the sake of trying to advance the Irish Cause. I thought it might interest you. Most of the contribution came from Parnell.

' I shall have to open my Irish campaign the last week of this month : it is likely to last about a fortnight. Then I shall have to bestow some attention on Liverpool. I want to get a lot of our book done before that time and left in your hands to be adorned and vivified. I send you eight slips and have put a cross where I want you to supply some touches about Australia. Exercise firm but gentle authority so that I shall not overcrowd our canvas. There is no room for the " nice girl." I think I am rather tired of " nice girls." It is delightful to hear that you are coming to town on Monday. I suppose I shall not see you in Chester House any more. I shall hold it always in grateful and tender memory, but I can dispense with it all the same, seeing that you are coming two hours nearer to me. Certainly we must go to a theatre. *Olivia* [1] is by far the most interesting thing to see.'

London, Oct. '85.

' I have come from a dinner-party, dear Colleague, at the house of our young Russian poet.[2] I am about to read some proofs and write some letters and now I take the opportunity

[1] All theatre-goers of the eighties will remember the reproduction of *Olivia* at the Lyceum Theatre, in which Miss Ellen Terry repeated her exquisite impersonation of the title rôle and Sir Henry Irving scored perhaps his greatest success as the ' Vicar of Wakefield.'

[2] Mr. André Raffalovich.

to send you the *Daily News* with the notice of your book. To-morrow I hope to call on you if you will allow me, after your luncheon-party, and then if you care to go to Helen Mathers' we might go, and if not, can talk over our work and put it together—which I think would be more profitable. Meanwhile don't work too hard: we are getting on capitally.'

'This is how I spent yesterday. A political conference, and the elections at noon, presided over by Parnell, lasted until six. A dinner-party, and then a great public meeting at which I took the chair. This lasted until eleven. I refused various invitations to supper and came home accompanied by several friends.—Talk, cigars, brandy and soda, lemon squashes and so forth until about one. Then I read your letter. I hope you are settling down comfortably and I wonder how your first dinner-party went off and whether anyone missed me! We are going to Longford to-morrow and I shall have an unbroken succession of meetings for two days diversified by banquets and ending with a public lecture to be delivered by your hapless colleague. Needless to say I am going to another meeting to-day—and so, as Jean Paul Richter says, dismissing a subject which doesn't seem very attractive, like that of my meetings—"and so, Halloo!"

Dublin, Oct. '85.

'I have just come from breakfast at the Archbishop's. I shall be glad to get back to our work again and to my friend in her restored and renovated home. I do not mean to attempt any other literary work, except for leading articles, until we have finished "The Right Honourable." Then I shall go at the "Georges" and we will plan a new story. I find a singular charm in this artistic companionship of ours, and the story seems to grow easily and effectively.'

On August 14, '85, Parliament was prorogued prior to an appeal to the country. Then followed, all through the autumn, the excitement of a general election. Mr. Gladstone's manifesto to the electors of Midlothian more than suggested that he intended to adopt the principle of Home Rule for Ireland.

But the Irish leader took exception to a later utterance at Edinburgh, and a manifesto was issued, signed by Parnell,

denouncing the Gladstonians and calling upon Irish voters to support the Salisbury-Carnarvon administration. The political situation was as a witches' cauldron, in which wonderful possibilities were brewing. To one even remotely in the movement it was absorbingly interesting. How well I remember the fall of that 'pink snow'—as Mr. McCarthy called it—of telegrams announcing the results of the polling. All through that summer and autumn, Mr. McCarthy kept his literary colleague at Chester House posted as to the progress of public affairs, sandwiching dissertations upon the plot of 'The Right Honourable' with news of electioneering riots and of speeches by Parnell in Ireland which were read with horror and pronounced revolutionary by the Tory squires and squiresses about us. These made no secret of their bloodthirsty desire that Mr. Parnell might, even in this enlightened age, be beheaded on Tower Hill. Failing such summary vengeance, they trusted that Liberals and Conservatives would combine disinterestedly, enforce coercion and put an end to the Nationalists' impertinent aspirations.

Lord Randolph Churchill, the impetuous Tory-Democrat, at that time a variable figure looming large on the political horizon, justified the backing out of the Conservative party on the Carnarvon negotiations and his own breezy overtures in the Irish direction by saying that they had seen clearly the impossibility of educating the Tory squires to any sort of acceptance of the principle of Home Rule. The Tory squires and their belongings were certainly considerably behind the march of current events. Even the forceful personality of Mr. Chamberlain—not then a revolter against Mr. Gladstone's leadership—had scarcely made itself felt in old-fashioned country-houses. I remember an occasion when we had taken Mr. Justin McCarthy, who was staying with us at Chester House at the time, to a garden-party given by a Catholic Tory lady in our neighbourhood. I

well recall his gently whimsical smile when our hostess turned to him with velvety courtesy and an ingenuous misunderstanding of his position, other than that of the author of 'The History of Our Own Times,' who had a seat in Parliament and was supposed to favour the Irish Cause.

'But dear Mr. McCarthy, *you* know about politics, and you can tell me *who is* this Mr. Chamberlain who seems to be so often mentioned in the newspapers?'

It seems incredible, but the attitude of our hostess not unfairly represented that of many home-staying squires and their wives in the Midlands. Meanwhile, with the more engrossing interest of politics, literary collaboration takes second place in the letters.

'As matters now stand, it seems likely I shall have to contest Derry after all. There appears to be some difficulty on both sides about Herbert Gladstone—a sort of feeling that if I were to give way to him, it might indicate a positive alliance between the Liberals and us, which might not be of permanent advantage to either. I have said that I will do whatever the Irish Party think best: I am at their service altogether. . . . I have been dining in dear quaint old Dean's Yard to meet some Americans. I hope you had a good time at *your* dinner-party. . . .' Oct. '85.

It was decided that he should contest Londonderry, and he writes before starting for Ireland:

'We are likely to have a very close contest in Derry—a question of a few votes either way. Between ourselves I hope to be defeated. I was riding for a fall! That is only a personal and selfish feeling however, and I shall do my best to win. Write me a cheering line or two to Roddy's Hotel. With regards to Campbell.' Nov. 18, '85.

'We had a vast meeting here last night. It was in the open street: I spoke from a window. The night was fine and calm, with a moon, and the great sea of upturned faces looked most picturesque. I made quite a long oration. So far, there has been perfect order, but I fear for the polling day if the Roddy's Hotel, Derry, Nov. 11, '85.

rival crowds should meet. We have been holding no end of conferences and meetings. I don't feel very hopeful about the results of our fight here, but it will be a stout fight anyhow. I only hope we shall have no disturbance.'

Derry, Nov. '85. 'To-day we were taken for a long, beautiful but very cold drive by river and lake. For the time, I forgot politics and turned into a dreamer.

'What are you doing now, I wonder—this Sunday evening. Perhaps you are not in town, but away at the Crib.[1] If so, you can bring back one or two fresh touches of local colour for our country scenes. It soothes me to think of that terrace, and the river, and the "olives" and the furnace fires.'

Londonderry, Nov. 24, '85. 'We had a very enthusiastic meeting last night. So had our opponent on his side. His mob came under our window and yelled and groaned, but did no harm. I enclose you a copy of the famous manifesto.[2] Campbell would be glad; I am sure, that all his predictions about our going with the Liberals have been falsified. But I shall tell him more on that subject when I see him.'

Londonderry, Nov. '85. 'We are in the thick of our agitation here, but everything as yet is very quiet and well conducted. We hold rival meetings every night and my opponent and I abuse each other to our heart's content. To-morrow is the polling day, but we shall not know the result till Friday when I will wire it to you.

'. . . In the midst of our contest; but so far it is not very exciting. We are keeping indoors to avoid the worry of the streets, and it is a dull wet day. Every moment some one of our friends comes rushing in with some piece of news or suggestion or alarmist report and so on. I am not hopeful about the election: I am absolutely unexcited!! If I get any chance at all to-day I shall begin a description of the results of our imaginary elections, and our hero's attitude and appreciation of their effect on his own position. I will next go to the interviews with the democrat and the Jacobite peer and will do the Cosmopolitan Club:[3] and I think a meeting with the lower and wilder order of the social democrats might bring in the weird aspect of London by night. We could go somewhere together later on, you and I, and look at

[1] A cottage in Northamptonshire near Chester House.

[2] Parnell's manifesto after Mr. Gladstone's Edinburgh speech, disclaiming adherence to the Liberals.

[3] In *The Right Honourable.*

some parts of London under peculiar night lights and compose a picture. To-morrow I suppose I shall not be able to write to you. After the declaration of the poll here I have to go to Belfast—to deliver a long promised lecture. If there be no contest in Longford I shall return to Dublin to-morrow and London on Monday morning. Send me a line to Ebury Street to say whether I may come to luncheon, or at three o'clock. . . . How I rejoice at the prospect of being in London again. . . .

'I have just been discoursing with a group of excited friends. Why can't I get excited? I am to have a contest in Longford. A local landlord opposes me. He has not the ghost of a chance. He can only put himself and me to trouble and expense.'

The Londonderry election was lost to the Nationalists by a few votes, and Mr. McCarthy proceeded to his old constituency.

'A wet and dreary day: the polling is going on miles away for I am staying in the division of the county for which I am not standing. To-morrow the votes will be counted and we shall know the result. Everyone says there can be no doubt as to that, but in politics I hold that nothing is certain. We had a large meeting yesterday and a long drive to it and from it. A torrent of rain came down upon us while we were driving out, and at night when we were just starting off to return, a too lively horse simply kicked the car we had mounted into pieces and left us prostrate. Nobody much minded however, these things don't count in Ireland: and there was only a little delay while we were getting another conveyance and a less humorsome horse. We have had to drive over the whole of the electoral division into every town and village, haranguing the people. Now we are off once more—fifteen miles across country.' Longford, Nov. '85.

Mr. McCarthy was of course victor at Longford. Now the General Election was over, and there seemed to have been much cry and little wool. For when the country had spoken, things remained pretty much as they had been, and the Irish leader could still turn the scale whichever way he

chose. Nobody knew what either of the great parties meant to do—in fact which would buy the Irish vote. At the end of the year, Mr. McCarthy writes :

Dec. '85. 'I had some talk with Lord Randolph last night, and infer from what he said that his party thought they had no chance about Home Rule after Gladstone had taken it up and that they had therefore better drop it and take to the British Philistine view. The country squires, he says, are very hard to manage : and indeed I heard much the same thing from Lord Carnarvon. Lord Randolph says that his strong wish is that the Conservatives should be turned out of office at once. They cannot govern, he says, under present conditions. And he wants to have them out of the responsibility.'

The Great Opportunity had come. Mr. Gladstone, waiting on office, was pledged to the principle of Home Rule. The Conservative Ministry, certain to go out at the meeting of the new Parliament—unless, which was extremely unlikely, they should prove themselves willing to pay the price demanded for the Irish vote—were, it was said, riding for a fall. The split in the Liberal Party had begun and Mr. Gladstone was finding himself deserted by many of his former colleagues. From the onset, Lord Hartington was irreconcilable. There still remained some uncertainty as to whether Mr. Chamberlain would desert his former chief.

How closely future history was affected by Mr. Chamberlain's attitude in this crisis, and how near, but for personal jealousy and a tactless blunder, the chasm in the Liberal party was to being bridged over, is told by Sir Henry Lucy in his delightful volume 'Sixty Years in the Wilderness.' There, in his 'Page of Secret History,' the true tale of Mr. Chamberlain's recalcitration is set forth in the late Mr. Labouchere's most characteristic style. 'Labby,' to whom the atmosphere of political intrigue was as that of Monte Carlo to a born gambler, had been chosen as private negotiator

between the three camps—Gladstonian, Dissentient-Liberal, and Nationalist. Of his dealings with the Nationalists nothing is said in that page of secret history. Mr. Labouchere was, however, extremely active in the Irish direction, for everything depended upon what terms Parnell should find agreeable. Perhaps Parnell distrusted the intermediary. At any rate he kept himself well out of the way of self-committal.

Among friends more or less 'in the know' Mr. Labouchere was delightfully frank concerning his and other people's doings and opinions, and to a sympathetic dinner-companion would drawl forth in his neutral voice with his bland cynical smile and the twinkling gleam in his eyes piquant revelations of plots and counter-plots.

Now, while in anticipation of an immediate Conservative downfall, the Gladstonians are formulating a future Home Rule Bill, the intermediary's anxiety is to learn what Parnell will or will not accept. If Justin McCarthy 'can influence Parnell's mind so as to induce him to assent to Home Rule on his—J. McC.'s—lines, the matter is settled and the feud between the Liberals and the Irish is bridged over.' . . . Here is an opportunity 'which, if lost will never recur—not of a Home Rule Bill patched up between two parties, but of a Home Rule Bill in the very widest sense of the word—so wide that no practical Irishman ever dreamt of it two years ago.' Lord Randolph Churchill, dead against resigning a week back, is now said to be inclined towards it. The Cabinet is divided, Lord Salisbury against resignation, while the Queen, it is reported, is doing her best to keep him in power. A flippant supporter declares that 'the G.O.M. is, simply, mad to get in.' Then, as Parliament is about to open, rumour runs that the Government will ask for a vote of confidence and go out if refused. The future depends on Parnell . . . But where is the Errant Chief? . . . Cannot Mr. McCarthy get hold of the Wanderer?

. . . It is absolutely essential, if Mr. Gladstone is to be held, that negotiations be begun at once. . . . The disappearance of Parnell is making quite a noise and is being talked about in the Reform Club. . . . 'The G.O.M. will certainly go mad' says the flippant supporter, 'if they can't get hold of Parnell.' But, apparently, Parnell has no intention of becoming enmeshed in party threads.

Meanwhile, provisional terms are being sketched out by the wire-pullers as a basis for submission to Mr. Gladstone, 'who,' they say, 'will have his work cut out in getting his friends to assent.' Any scheme will do that would enable him to say that he had done something and which should put heart into the doubtful among his followers.

So the cry goes on. But there is still no word of the Errant Chief. Mr. McCarthy cannot, or does not choose to, discover the Wanderer. When, at last, Parnell comes on the scene, cold, calm, taciturn, mysterious, there remains the difficulty of getting a satisfactory schedule of terms to put before Mr. Gladstone. It is feared that in Parnell's ignorance of detail he will 'take refuge in Grattan's Parliament,' a formula unsuitable to the present emergency. What irony in the phrase, when one remembers its connection with the tragic end in Committee Room Number Fifteen!

Ghostly indeed seem the echoes of that party struggle, now that the strife has been so long past, now that so many of the combatants are in their graves! It is like reading, in cold blood by the grey light of new dawn, a play one has seen performed behind the glare of footlights, by actors under the influence of passionate excitement, before an audience thrilled to the tensest expectation. I think that was more or less how we all felt when the third act of the Parnell tragedy opened, not knowing that the threads of drama, now gathering to their knotting, were so soon to be cut short by a woman's hand.

CHAPTER II

THE GREAT OPPORTUNITY

The new Parliament was opened by the Queen on January 21, 1886, and the Conservative Government, which had coquetted dangerously with Home Rule, finding the impossibility of converting its prejudiced supporters, used Coercion as the instrument with which to commit honourable suicide. Meantime, our collaboration work went on to completion. On January 27 Mr. McCarthy writes :

' I left the copy to-day at Chatto's,[1] but had not time to see Chatto, as I had to go down to the House rather early because of the expectation of a Coercion announcement, which expectation as you see was fulfilled. But to threaten suppression of the National League is one thing—to suppress it is another—as you will *also* see.' Jan. '86.

On February 1, Lord Salisbury announced his resignation, and Mr. Gladstone proceeded to form a cabinet, with Lord Aberdeen as Irish Viceroy and Mr. John Morley as Secretary for Ireland.

Everyone knows the tale of that short Gladstone administration—of the cleavage of the Liberal Party and the bitterness and heartburning it caused : of the severing of ancient friendships and the coming together of ancient foes : of the anxiety with which people in the battle and people

[1] Of the Firm of Messrs. Chatto & Windus, with whom we had arranged for the publication of *The Right Honourable.*

outside the parliamentary strife awaited Mr. Gladstone's bill 'for the better government of Ireland,' which was brought forward on April 8 and was rejected at the second reading. Then, of how Mr. Gladstone in his turn appealed to the country, and of the result of the second general election within the space of a few months, which brought the Conservatives back to power and put off the Home Rule Bill for some time longer.

I go back and cull from the letters:

Feb. '86. 'There is some ominous talk about delay in the Irish policy: some announcement of a dilatory kind on Thursday. At such a time, of course, one hears all manner of rumours.

'It was not a very interesting dinner-party, dear Colleague. I did not hear much political news beyond the fact that Gladstone is in the highest spirits and enjoys immensely the prospect of the struggle and the success in which he firmly believes—and in which I also believe. I heard this from a man whom I know to be a good deal in his confidence and who was talking with him only this day.'

Feb. '86. 'I enclose a letter which came last evening from Chatto. You will see that he asks in a tone of mild and somewhat melancholy remonstrance for no less than fifty pages more (for "The Right Honourable"). . . . Now the question is, where those fifty pages are to come in and what they are to contain? I am strongly of opinion that they ought not to come in at the end—that we cannot afford to protract the fall of the curtain after the climax of the drama has been reached. Will you think this over and give me your ideas?

'Campbell and I were at the Garrick last night. I have been working at my "Georges." It is snowing hard. All looks dreary.'

Feb. '86. 'I was delighted to get your letter this morning. The letter was bright and genial and told me in various ways, indirect as well as direct, that the change and the quiet are doing you good. I like immensely your picture of the ways of your septuagenarians. Your notes will make capital "copy." I return you Walter Pollock's letter.[1] Of course you will

[1] Referring to work on the *Saturday Review*.

accept his offer, and equally of course I will help you in every possible way. I will think out subjects for you, coach you, do anything you like.'

'Gladstone's speech was very judicious, I am told, and in effect said, "No coercion and a fair consideration for Home Rule." He was greatly praised by Parnell whom I was just in time to hear and who made a speech admirable in its firmness and moderation, the speech of a statesman, to which the House listened with profound attention. . . .' Feb. '86.

'I am to have a busy day. I have to go down to the City. Then to attend a meeting of the Committee of Selection which will be long and important. Then to go to the House and see Parnell and interview John Morley. I met Lord Spencer suddenly in one of the Lobbies yesterday—I had not seen him for a long time. Only think, if I had been seen by some of the wilder spirits actually clasping hands in friendly converse with the hated "Red Earl!" Feb. '86.

'. . . Nothing fresh in politics. I have not seen Parnell, but he was in the House, and one of our men complained to me of his manner—said that he was growing terribly dictatorial. The fact is that Parnell is nervously afraid of anything being said or done just now which might give our enemies the slightest chance or handle against him—and he is quite right. We are holding a Committee meeting to-night—only about some small matters. . . . I was at Lady Maidstone's for luncheon to-day. Lord Ashburnham was there and "the Uncrowned" (Parnell).

'I had a talk with Morley. Gladstone particularly wants to be put *en rapport* with Parnell about Home Rule and the Land Question. I have persuaded Parnell to meet Morley on both subjects and give his views. Parnell is very confident about Gladstone's purpose, and thinks he will walk over Chamberlain, if Chamberlain should seriously resist. But Parnell thinks he will not seriously resist. By the way, Lord Orford has joined the English Home Rule Association of which Lord Ashburnham is the Chairman. This will create a sensation.' Mar. '86.

'. . . I heard a most interesting account yesterday of the silence and gloom of Disraeli's later days. How would some pictures of that kind do for our book? Our hero might visit some retired and outworn statesman of sated ambition with nothing left but retrospect. . . .

'I have been busy all day with politics and am finishing this in the midst of a meeting of our party to which I came on from a Committee meeting, and I am to have a second talk with Morley later on—so good-night.'

Mar. '86. 'Gladstone gave notice this evening of two measures. The first "To make better provision for the future government of Ireland"—in other words, Home Rule. The second to deal with the question of land purchase. The first measure he will bring in on Thursday week: the second on Thursday the fifteenth of April. Thus the Home Rule Scheme gets precedence which is what we all desire. Probably the Land-purchase Bill will never go very far: the crisis will come on Home Rule. I have just been talking to Parnell who is well content with the way things are going on and says he is sure we shall be able to accept Gladstone's Scheme as a complete settlement of the Home Rule Question. Morley came to me later on and told me he particularly wants to have a meeting with Parnell to-night, which I have arranged for at once. I fancy it will be something momentous.

'Chamberlain and Trevelyan formally took up their positions to-day below the gangway, thereby intimating, not merely that they were out of office, but also that they are not any longer pledged to support the Government in anything. I have been suggesting Joseph Cowan's name to several men who might be in a position to impress it on Gladstone. Parnell thinks it would not be proper that he should make any recommendation of the kind, but he said that if his opinion were asked, he would of course give it altogether in support of Cowan.'

Mar. '86. 'There is no fresh news in the political sense. People say that Chamberlain has made a mistake and that his move is already a failure. I have been offering my congratulations to Stansfeld. He and I are very old friends and have often been political allies in what Swinburne would call "dead days forgotten."'

Early in April '86. 'I was very glad to get your letter this morning, for, knowing the difficulty of ordering one's time in a country house when Races are on, I did not feel certain that I should hear from you. I liked your description of your hosts and fellow guests, but am delighted to learn that you are coming back on Saturday. . . .

'I have not been able to scheme out "The Ladies' Gallery"[1] —not one little bit. The ideas won't come. Do you remember how we got all the best parts of "The Right Honourable" as we walked up and down the terrace at Chester House one evening? I fancy the ideas of "The Ladies' Gallery" must come in the same way. I have been working at the "Georges"; but we had a late night at the House and I didn't get up till correspondingly late—although I might as well have done so, for, after four hours, I couldn't go to sleep.

'What John Morley wanted of me was to bring about another conference with Parnell. He seemed well content with things, but Parnell was less optimistic than I have seen him yet during this chapter of our history. He is afraid Gladstone may be led to make concessions to English parties which might render it difficult for us to accept his scheme. I don't believe it will be so, but it does certainly a little alarm me to hear even a fear of that kind expressed by Parnell.'

On April 8, 1886, Mr. Gladstone brought in his first Home Rule Bill. Expectation was intense. Just before that day Mr. McCarthy writes:

'There are so many applications for places in the galleries for Thursday that the Speaker has directed a ballot among the members as the only way of settling the question. This is in my experience entirely a novelty.

'I have engaged to dine with the Tennants on Sunday to meet Prince Krapotkine. . . . I want to meet Krapotkine again—I had met him several times years ago. . . . And I have a pale ghost of a hope that you will be asked to the Tennants and will go.'

'I have just come back from a first-night performance at the Princess' Theatre. The Play was absurd rubbish, but there was a very good house. April '86.

'My young friend, previously unseen—Miss ——, turned up to-day. Her admiration for my literary gifts took the form of what Sydney Smith calls "splendid flashes of silence" with an occasional outburst of some remark fired off as if to show that she was not afraid. The interview was not well

[1] Our second joint novel, published as *The Rebel Rose*.

managed by me. I am hopeless for the task of drawing out shy people—girls especially. I felt that much was expected of me, and that I was not coming up to expectation. I wish I could take a greater interest in people in general than I do. There are so few of my fellow creatures with whom I really wish to talk.'

May '86. 'I have heard from Lord Ashburnham and am going to his house on Thursday, so I shall not delight Major Landon by giving to his cookery the approving word of an expert and a *gourmet*! I shall depute you, as one fully qualified with myself to give the "stamp of fame"'[1]

My literary colleague writes to me from the country house of Lord Ashburnham, where he was staying; and his host, having strong Legitimist sympathies, and we ourselves being at that time greatly interested in the portrayal of our Jacobite heroine in 'The Rebel Rose,' we took the liberty of using—with modifications—for our novel, the romantic background thus supplied. I believe that Lord Ashburnham's permission was asked, but, in any case, Mr. McCarthy was so punctilious in such matters, that he must have been sure that it would not have been withheld.

Ashburnham Place, Battle, Sussex, undated. 'A few notes, my dear Colleague, scratched hastily off at midnight!

'Such copy! The only other guests staying here are the young Spanish prince, son of Don Carlos, the Legitimist King of Spain—and his tutor a Jesuit priest. The boy clever,

[1] My literary colleague alludes to an occasion when our friend, Major Landon—well known in the hunting-field and the author of *The Pytchley Cookery Book*, whose two hobbies were sport and cooking—did us the honour of himself cooking a dinner at our house for a small and select party. After having doffed his *chef's* cap and apron, and, leaving the dishing up to my deeply interested cook, he joined us at the dinner-table and submitted to the criticism of his *plats*. A delightful personality was Major Landon, and we never had a more amusing dinner-party. But my literary colleague was certainly not qualified to play the *gourmet's* part. His health would probably not have failed him as it did had he paid more attention to regularity in his meals. For, except when he dined out or gave a little dinner-party at the House of Commons, his food—during the session at least—was promiscuously and hastily snatched in the intervals of debate and leader-writing.

sweet, deferential to everyone, but all the time with the air of one who says to himself : " I am the heir to the throne of Spain ! "—joyous, wilful, insisting on waiting on everyone, lighting one's cigar, filling one's glass—royalty playing at humility—we'll turn that boy into a girl, shan't we ? You understand.'

So Don Jaime unconsciously acted as model, with sex reversed, for our wilful heroine, Mary Stuart Beaton.

The notes run :

' First a great gate with a solid stone lodge like a stunted castle. Then a regular pinewood, steep, precipitous, much underwood and undergrowth. Sun setting behind the pines. Then great hilly downs covered with primroses. Then more woods and a road along the edge of a precipitous hill, the carriage now mounting up and now creeping down. About two miles from the outer gate, we get a glimpse of a lake. On the edge of the lake, a great red stone château with wide terrace and flight of steps. I am received by a little troop of servants. Vast hall—staircases, pillars, portraits, armour. . . .

' The steward, a grave, suave gentleman, with a smiling face, appears the boss of the concern. From the hall-floor, you see straight up to a glass dome. Two great flights of stairs meet in the middle and there are paintings everywhere—my host is the owner of the great Ashburnham collection. Through the glass roof, you see the shadow of a little turret, from which, later on, you look at the view.

' A chapel in the house : mass to-morrow at half-past nine. Yet though Lord Ashburnham is a Catholic, his actual demesne includes the parish church and the vicarage and even the churchyard.

' My rooms are the Chinese green rooms—called Chinese because of the pattern of the paper. There are a large sitting-room with book-shelves and pictures—some old triptychs—bedroom, dressing-room and bathroom—a territory of white and grey marble with the bath sunk in the middle.

' Dinner in the breakfast-room off the hall : and at the dinner some Cyprus wine which my host's ancestors had bought or stolen from monks, though I should add that our host did

not want to inflict this wine upon us: we might have any civilised wine we liked.

'The Jesuit is bland, prematurely old, with thin grey hair and a very clearly-cut, refined face. You might have thought him a man of seventy: you find him one of fifty. He does not treat his charge like a prince, except by letting him go out of the room first.

'The Prince, a touch capricious—a frolicky boy, very sweet: in one sense precocious: in another childish. He made his orange sea-sick: he did a Home Rule Speech in mimicry of a stammering Englishman. When told not to talk Spanish because "Mr. McCarthy doesn't understand you," he would insist.

"But you told me that Mr. McCarthy knows everything, and of course he knows Spanish." And when once or twice he said something that I did understand: "Ah! there! I told you he *does* understand. I daresay he speaks it better than you do."

'And he would play at pouring out my wine, saying when expostulated with: "No, no, this is my chief: I must wait on him." . . .'

From London again:

Upstairs Lobby. Midnight.

'I have accomplished my social duties. I went to my dinner party and my "Princess" party. My hostess—not the Princess—told me she could not extract "The Right Honourable" from Mudies, though she has sent again and again. Why don't they take more copies and give the authors a better chance? We hapless authors! I was much interested in my dinner party. My host is great on wines, also great on flowers, colours, china and pictures. He told me that every plate and glass he has is made on a separate pattern of his own device and made specially for him, and that no two articles are alike in pattern, make or colour. He showed me paintings of some of the distinguished ladies of his family in past days, one of whom had the honour of being a mistress of Charles II. He observed to me that as her husband did not seem to have minded much while he was living, there was no particular reason why he, a mere descendant, should distress himself about it now. One thing he did regret—that it brought no pension or emolument of any kind to the lady's descendants.

He showed me a very interesting and beautiful painting of Mary Stuart's head after decapitation—evidently an idealised picture, for no severed head ever wore such an expression of sweet, resigned tranquillity. We might bear it in mind when painting our "Mary" of the "Ladies' Gallery."

'There was an old naval captain at the dinner who was wild about "The Right Honourable."'

'I thought it likely that you might want the enclosed bit of description at once, so I have written it and send it to you. June '86.

'I enclose a letter about "The Right Honourable" from a member of the House—a man whose opinion is worth having. He is not much of a politician: is a barrister and was an officer in the French service, but is fond of reading, and—as you will see—has some taste! I went to see Mrs. Jeune after I left you. Lord Ashburnham was there, and Dr. William Smith, Editor of *The Quarterly Review*, with various others. There was much talk about the "Right Honourable" and whom the different personages in the book were meant for. *Lady Betty* was talked about. Mrs. Jeune said she was evidently a compound of several persons, but that some of Lady Dorothy Nevill's ways and sayings went to make her up. . . .'

There is a part of Battersea, which my literary colleague christened Fitzurseham in his novel 'Camiola,' to which we sometimes went together. It was the region in which he had lived when he first came to try his fortune in London. He had not been long married and he and his young wife were very happy. He often talked to me about his married life and would point out the spots endeared to him by its memories. He interested me, too, in the historical associations of that south side of London. He showed me the old red-brick mansion—turned into a seminary of sorts, I fancy—that had belonged to Bolingbroke, and several times we strolled in its grounds. And he would take me into the fine old church, where we studied the Bolingbroke monument and its inscription: and then we would sit on the river-wall and he would talk to me about the Queen

Anne period—the brilliant St. John, Swift and Stella, the Mohocks and all the rest, making that past time seem very rich and real. And often, too, he would make pilgrimages there himself, as he tells me :

June, '86. 'I have been over the water to "Fitzurseham," the church, "Fitzurse House" and all the old places. It was a wild sort of day—alternations of tropical rain, storm and soft bright sunshine, and, as I contrived to get to Fitzurseham between the tempests of rain, I had a good time and enjoyed myself after my peculiar fashion which you understand by this time. When I can't occupy myself as I would, I have generally a desire to wander over into Fitzurseham and perform the congenial part of ghost !

'I liked our talk to-day, short though it was. I liked it ever so much. I was out of spirits somehow—at odds with Fate, as the Elizabethan poets might say, and it was a real pleasure to see you. I hope we shall be able to settle steadily to our work and get on with it.'

On June 7 the great debate on the second reading of Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule Bill came to an end, and Mr. McCarthy wrote me this hurried note from the House of Commons :

June 7, '86 after second reading of Home Rule Bill. June '86. 'We are defeated, my colleague, by a majority of thirty—311 to 341. Never mind !—as M—— says, we'll soon win. Gladstone's speech splendid. Great scene at Division.'

'No political news except that the Liberal Council of Lord Hartington's Division have decided by an overwhelming majority that they will not accept his candidature, and that an intimation exactly the same has been conveyed to Richard Chamberlain, Joseph's brother, by the Caucus of his Constituency. This looks decidedly well. Hartington's constituents say that they will let a Tory get in rather than return Hartington. . . .'

On June 27, 1886, Parliament was again dissolved, and people said that there had not been, since the First Reform Bill, a general election so full of rancour and bitterness.

The great split of the Liberal Party is ancient history now. At the time, all things in life, big and little, seemed to be affected by that burning question of Home Rule, which divided families, turned friends into enemies, and, not least in the estimation of London hostesses, spoiled dinner parties.

Mr. McCarthy was soon in the thick of the fight. Two days after the Dissolution, he sends me an apology for the breaking of an engagement, a pink slip of paper with the impassioned appeal: '*For God's sake come on immediately. Party rely upon you. Not a moment to be lost. You are expected Derry for days past. Wire when you start.*'

June 29, '86.

'Alas! my dear colleague [he writes], I have to cross to Ireland to-night. I enclose a fervid telegram from the Secretary of the National League imploring me to rush over to Derry and begin the fight. I have no alternative but to throw over my engagement to speak at Rugby—and other engagements—and to go to Ireland. It is decidedly a nuisance, but it has to be got through. I don't think I mind the trouble so much as going out of town just when I want to stay here. However, I hope by the time I come back you will have got through "Miss Jacobsen,"[1] and be able to join me in a vigorous attempt on our work. We shall have it pretty nearly finished before we start for America—for I do hope you and Campbell will come out with me. I should love to show you New York, Boston, and Philadelphia, even Chicago—certainly Niagara—and to have a high old time. I am sure the American voyage will do you good. . . . I wish I could ordain something for you which would allow you to do just the sort of work you wished to do at the times when you were minded to do it.—And "thy own wish, wish I thee in every place!"

'Meanwhile I shall for the time be modest enough only to wish that you may have a good night's rest.—And let the literary recompenses and successes come later on if they will.'

[1] A story I was then writing.

Roddy's Hotel, Londonderry, June 30, '86.

'I am late in the field. My opponent has been a full week here. But it was not my fault. I had to wait for a decision. I am to hold a private meeting of my friends and supporters to-night and two public meetings to-morrow at three o'clock and half-past seven. So far as I can judge from a hasty glance over the field, the chances are better for me than they were last time, but I don't think I shall win—the registration being the same as it was last winter. I wonder if you understand this dry politico-technical stuff.'

July 2, '86 Londonderry.

'I must write you, if only to soothe my mind after hours of political racket. Great public meeting last night and the nomination—now a mere form—took place to-day. I am surrounded by people talking and asking questions—deluged by telegrams—inundated with floods of detail. . . . I would write to you ever so fully if I only had time. . . . I am cheered by your sympathy. We had a great open-air meeting last night with a very shaky platform, which however did not collapse, as, at one time, I firmly believed it would.'

Londonderry, July 4, '86.

'We are fighting our battle here very steadily, but I don't believe we can win. We don't admit this publicly but those of us who know, are prepared for defeat. One of our meetings had to be put off in consequence of the death of a very popular young physician—an ardent Nationalist and supporter of mine. He died just before the hour fixed for the meeting, and we decided not to go on. I spoke a few words in tribute to the young man, and the meeting dispersed in silence. It was melancholy. We shall not have the result of the poll announced till Tuesday at one. I will telegraph you at once.

'That evening I mean to go south towards Longford, taking Enniskillen by the way, where I have promised to attend a meeting and a demonstration. I am weary of the meetings, the speeches, the crowds—shuddering at the prospect of other meetings, other speeches, other crowds.'

Londonderry, July 5, '86.

'The eventful day has come and the voting is going on steadily. So far the town is perfectly quiet, though there is intense earnestness on both sides. I don't believe there is any danger of disturbance till after the declaration of the poll: even then I don't fear anything serious. . . .

'I have people in upon me every moment—local leaders, lawyers, priests, officials, voters, interviewers, loungers,

mere talkers and I know not what else—and the pink snow of telegrams keeps falling all the time. . . .'

'After the battle! I am well content. The result indeed passed my expectations. We have reduced the Orange majority to three; and I am assured that on petition we shall win the seat. Anyhow, we have done well.' Londonderry, July 6, '86.

'I had not time to write or even to send a telegram yesterday. We had several meetings and demonstrations and a picnic on Lough Erne, which only ended at night-fall. To-day I go on to Longford.' Enniskillen, July 8, '86.

'I must write you a few lines to tell you how much I sympathise with you about Sir R—— A——'s death. I feel deeply for Lady A. because you feel so much for her. I know how little you will enjoy any manner of gaiety, yet I suppose you will have to go through with your Race-visit. It almost seems as if I ought not to talk of work. . . . All human hopes and labours and struggles are so terribly rebuked by such an event.' July '86

From London again:

'I fear I shall not be able to see you before to-morrow for I have my American letter to do, and it can't be done early, as I may hear of some news. I had a day of what the Americans would call "tearing round." I had to see Dr. Roose and was for a long time with him. And then I had to go and say good-bye to Mrs. Jeune who is leaving town for Scotland on Thursday, and whom I shall not see again for six months. There was a group of people there, but she spoke very nicely as I was going and I felt touched. To Lady Dorothy Nevill I said good-bye on Sunday. These two women held to me during all the fiercest time of coercion and obstruction when our party were hated in London. Their faces, as Johnson said of Thrale, were never turned to me but in kindness. . . .' Aug. '86.

Mr. McCarthy's lecturing tour in America and the capacity of his voice to fill the large halls in which he was expected to speak, became a matter of consideration, and he decided to consult a famous voice-producer.

'I went to see my German elocutionist, Emil Bencke. He lives in West Kensington—a long way off—and I spent an

hour with him: an hour of preparatory consultation. I am to go to him four days in each week for the three weeks following next Tuesday and he promises to do great things with my voice and articulation. Apparently I have muddled away my power of elocution by not paying attention to it. But he thinks this can be put right. And he says I have quite remarkable breathing strength, which is a good thing, as it will be very important for me to know how to get the most out of my voice with the least effort.'

Aug. '86. '. . . Have just finished ten pages of "The Ladies Gallery." I will send you to-morrow my general ideas about our plot which I should like to have clearly defined. I wonder if we might go and see some East End Music Hall soon? I want a description of one for the book. I shall have to go alone if you cannot come with me, but of course it would be ever so much better if we could all go together. When the House meets, you and Campbell must come and dine; for there are several points I want you to notice, with which I am probably too familiar to make the most of them.'

There was some fear expressed just then, on the Gladstonian side, that the Tories, in office, might bring in a bill for some form of local government in Ireland and so forestall Mr. Gladstone's larger intentions. Justin McCarthy disclaims the idea:

'. . . Herbert Gladstone need not have the slightest fear that Parnell will accept any mere crumbs of Local Government from the Tories. . . The meeting of the Irish Party is going on in Dublin to-day. I did not go, partly because I am very busily engaged, and partly too because it is not at a large meeting of the whole party that the real and final policy is ever shaped and proclaimed.'

Aug. 17, '86. 'If I do not hear from you to the contrary, I shall go to see you at luncheon. I have many things to talk about. *That* meeting came off to-day. There is a dinner to-night of the members of Gladstone's late Cabinet, a dinner to talk over policy and plans for the Session, and Gladstone was particularly anxious that Morley should come to the dinner in a condition to explain to him personally—not necessarily, as Morley put it to me, to be communicated to all the members

of his late Cabinet in detail—the precise views of Parnell as to the course which ought to be taken in the immediate future in Parliament.

'Parnell came a little later: drove straight from Euston. He was got up in regular moor costume—Irish, that is to say—in light tweeds and looked very much better in health than when I saw him last, very strong and very handsome. . . . Parnell had been away in Wicklow, shooting. There was some delay in communicating with him because he was at a shooting box in the mountains a considerable distance from his own house. By the way, "The Meeting of the Waters" is on his property.

'There was a conference, of which I will give you as much detail as you care for to-morrow, but the effect of which is that we are to take an attitude of studied moderation.'

In regard to our future 'Book of Memories' Mr. McCarthy dictated the following notes, which I took down on my typewriter:

'The interview[1] was fixed for a quarter past six because Parnell was coming from Ireland that morning by the train which leaves Dublin at six forty and he could not be at Euston before 5.45 (in the afternoon): and he was going to drive straight to my place. Morley on the other hand was to dine with the members of the late Cabinet at 8 o'clock, and Gladstone particularly wished him to be in a position when he came to dinner to tell him—Gladstone—what Parnell's views were as to the general policy to be adopted in this coming Session. Parnell had been away in Wicklow, shooting. Aug. 18, '86.

'Morley came first—a little after six, and he and I had a long talk about literature, collaboration, newspapers, politicians and politics. With regard to Ireland he was rather despondent. He was convinced that it would be impossible to prevent outrages from occurring in the winter. He explained it this way. Prices of every produce had fallen so much that in many places it was absolutely impossible for the farmers to pay the rent. Landlords, on the other hand, were exasperated now and were furthermore convinced that with the

[1] Lord Morley mentions this interview in his *Life of Gladstone.*

Tories in power they could do whatever they liked. So he said there would be wholesale evictions. I was able to confirm this view from my own personal knowledge, for I had just received letters from the Longford Board of Guardians, telling me that in one district about fifty families were to be evicted. Morley said that in such a condition of things no power on earth could prevent outrages. He said they would be directed in two ways—against the Landlords and the Landlords' agents and also against men who took farms from which others had been evicted. In all this, of course, I entirely agreed and we also agreed about the real nature of moonlighting in Kerry. Moonlighting in Kerry and part of Clare we both agreed had nothing to do with the regular land agitation. It was simply cattle-lifting carried on in the regular system, like that of the Highland caterans, and the forcible carrying off of weapons is done to enable the cattle-lifting to be accomplished.

'The moonlighters of Kerry care no more for the Land League or Home Rule or the political agitation than they did about the Eastern question and were about as amenable to the authority of Parnell as they were to the authority of Bismarck. But there could be no doubt that, in many places, the poorer of the population connived at their doings when they were brought into antagonism with the police. Under all the conditions, Morley was of opinion that the Conservative Government would get a good excuse during the winter for introducing a coercion bill next session. He put it to me as one possible course of action which he did not recommend but suggested to me for consideration, whether it would not be well to resist coercion so determinedly as to render it necessary for the majority in the House of Commons to expel the Irish members from the House altogether and thus to leave Ireland unrepresented in Parliament. Then, he said, let England be put to the public scandal of having to govern Ireland like a Crown colony.

'"You remember," he said, "that Parnell himself had often declared that it would be impossible to stand the strain of the present condition much longer, and that he would rather see Ireland governed as a Crown colony than juggled with, as she is at present, by a representation at Westminster which leaves her absolutely at the mercy of any majority."

'I could not at all agree with Morley's views on this subject. I told him I took a much more hopeful view of the future and of the action of the Conservatives than he did, and that my conviction was that after the interval of this winter, and when Lord Salisbury's vehement declarations against Home Rule had been forgotten, the Tories would set to work to dish the Liberals by bringing in a Home Rule scheme of their own. I reminded him that despite all the denials in the newspapers, Lord Salisbury had been brought near to this already. He said that he knew this quite well and admitted that there might be something in my forecast in regard to the Tories, for he dwelt on the fact that Lord Randolph had only declared against "repeal," and he said "we all declare against repeal, and we put whatever meaning we like on the declaration."

'About this time, Parnell came, and I thought I had better leave these two alone for a time at all events, so I said I had some work to finish. Parnell said "I hope you are not leaving the house for I shall want to talk to you," and I said no, that I should come back very soon. I went out of the room and wrote something for a while. I thought it probable that Gladstone would be better pleased to hear that some of the talk between Parnell and Morley was absolutely in private. When I came back I asked if they had come to an understanding, and Morley said "Yes, Parnell will tell you all about it."

'Then Parnell told me that his impression was that, with regard to the interests of Ireland, we had better for the present fall back upon an attitude of great caution and reserve. He was for having an amendment to the Address, bringing up evictions and the Land Question generally, as well as the amendment about the Belfast riots, and he was not for raising any question of Home Rule at the present moment. I said I had heard that Mr. Gladstone was afraid we—the Irish members—might be too easily contented with some crumbs of local government given us by the Tories, and that if that were so, while he—Mr. G—— did not say that he could blame us for taking any course we thought proper, he did not see that there would in that case be any occasion for him to remain in public life, as his only object now in continuing in Parliament was to carry on the Home Rule struggle for us. I understood

Morley tacitly to assent to this as a description of Mr. Gladstone's feelings. Parnell said that there was not the slightest chance of the Irish Party or the Irish people ever accepting anything smaller in terms than Gladstone's bill.

'Morley then went away and I talked with Parnell for a considerable time. The upshot of the talk was that we were for the present to confine ourselves to the Land Question and leave to the Tories the responsibility of dealing with Home Rule or omitting to deal with it. He said that he saw no good that could come from our bringing on an amendment on Home Rule just now, and thereby inviting public attention once more to the fact that a large majority of the House were against us; nor did he see any good that could be got by unduly prolonging the present session. "We shall have a full discussion," he said, of the Irish estimates, and shall shew them that we could keep them as long as we like." Nothing he thought was to be gained by carrying on the debate too long. "As to Home Rule," he said, "it must come; it is only a question of a very short time. We can afford to take an attitude of reserve for the present."

'He seemed, as he usually is, quite serene and well satisfied as to the condition of things. He looked the defeat straight in the face and was not in the least inclined to shirk it. But he looked through it and over it and beyond it and seemed well content.'

* * * * *

A question had arisen as to the legality of the Unionist victory in Derry. Mr. McCarthy's minority at the poll had been by three votes only, and, later, cases of impersonation on the Unionist side were proved which, on a petition from Derry, gave him the seat. Pending the decision he writes:

Aug. 18, '86. 'We are to have a meeting of our party after the Queen's speech and then a debate on the Address will begin. I have to get the opinion of some qualified lawyer like Sir Charles Russell as to whether I ought to take my seat formally or not while the Derry petition is pending—that is to say, whether, if I take my seat for North Longford in the formal way, that

fact would prevent the judges from being able to declare me Member for Derry if the petition succeeds. The Speaker says it is a difficult point on which I had better have a lawyer's advice.

Our plans for getting on with the second joint novel, before embarking on our American trip, were interfered with by claims upon both sides during this dead season which we were not able to spend, as we had hoped, in quiet work in London.

My literary colleague, harried by unexpected difficulties of arrangement, writes in a tone of dejection :

'Our August from which we expected so much quiet and productive literary companionship, will not turn out as we hoped. . . . Do you think I am in a desponding mood ? I suppose I am. But I am determined not to let despondency prevent me from helping to get our work done. I feel a little like a man in exile who is sorely tempted to sit down and brood, but who feels he must do something if his heart would not droop altogether. Well, I don't mean to let my heart droop. . . . I am alone in the house—have been for hours. I wish you could be with me and inspire me with some fresh thoughts. I shall not write any more of our story to-day. . . . Oddly enough, one of the little scenes I have been trying to describe is humorous in its tone—mildly comic. Comic ! Only think !'

Again, in a brief working interlude :

'I thought it likely you might want the enclosed bit of description at once. . . . What good work we did to-day : it makes one happy. . . . I shall be busy in various ways to-morrow and don't expect to get a line done. . . .'

'. . . Campbell has just come in, and I break off for a moment or two. . . . We had a long and a very pleasant talk. I think Campbell is quite right in many of his ideas. . . . Now it is late and I must bring this to a close. Campbell reminded me that I am to come and see you to-morrow evening. Aug. '86.

'. . . After this I shall write some letters of an uninteresting, political kind. Men are pressing claims on me because of

losses they had in the elections—by pressing them on me, I mean pressing them on the party through me and urging me to take into consideration this and that and the other thing—all very prosaic and vulgar. . . .

'Tim Healy is coming to dine. How I wish you might be here to enjoy his odd, extraordinary, inexhaustible humour—the humour which at last fairly conquered the House of Commons. The house began by despising and ended by delighting in him.

'Sir Charles Russell thinks, on the whole, I had better not take my seat.'

House of Commons.

'A little word or two. . . . That was a bright and pleasant hour to-day. If I were not ashamed to allude to the outworn old metaphor about the oasis in the desert, I should employ it to describe what my meetings with you are to me.

'My faith in you gives me a wider faith in other things as well. And so I wish you a good night and a hopeful morning hour.'

MRS. CAMPBELL PRAED

(*Painted by J. M. Jopling, Member of the Institute of Painters in Water Colours*, 1884)

CHAPTER III

ACROSS THE ATLANTIC

In the autumn of 1886 my husband and I made a delightful little tour in the United States,[1] which we had never visited, voyaging across with Mr. McCarthy, and remaining as his travelling companions during the first three or four weeks of his lecturing tour, after which the parties divided, each going a different way.

We were at work then on a second novel, the success of 'The Right Honourable' having justified a fresh venture. This book was begun as 'The Ladies' Gallery,' its chief interest centring in the House of Commons and—it would seem, almost prophetically, looking back from the point of view of to-day—upon a scheme for the abolition of the House of Lords. But Mr. Bentley, who was to issue the novel—a staunch Tory and the Queen's titular publisher—put forward plaintively his fear of being compromised with the powers that were. This partly because some of the characters—*Tommy Tressel*, for instance, who was modelled mainly upon the late Mr. Henry Labouchere—had, with obvious alterations, parallels in the political personages of the day. Partly also because there was at that time in London society a freakish revival of Jacobite traditions, and

[1] In his *Story of an Irishman* Mr. McCarthy touches briefly on this trip of ours with him.

some few of the old Catholic families posed fantastically as adherents of the last Stuart princess—the descendant, through the House of Savoy, of that ill-fated 'Madame,' Duchess of Orleans and daughter of Charles I, whose pretensions were figuratively embodied in our heroine of 'The Rebel Rose.' For, in deference to Mr. Bentley's wishes, the book was brought out anonymously under that title, while an entirely different, joint novel fulfilled the serial engagements of the original 'Ladies' Gallery,' under the old title.

We did not, however, finish this book, as we had hoped, in America, and Mr. McCarthy and I found that collaboration, when the Atlantic rolled between fellow-workers, was by no means so easy or so agreeable as it had proved in the case of 'The Right Honourable.'

Just before we started for America, it was my good fortune to be present—at first in the gallery, and later on at the table itself, where we, onlookers above, were brought down like good children for dessert—at a farewell dinner given to Mr. Justin McCarthy by his colleagues of the Irish Party.

Mr. Parnell presided, and the occasion is memorable to me, being the first time that I met 'the Uncrowned King,' in what might be termed private life—for the dinner was as much a meeting of friends as a political 'send-off.' Though much sought after, Mr. Parnell rarely or never went into London society. I had often seen him at the House of Commons, but not before at such close quarters as to-night.

It happened that I was placed next him during the short further time the guests remained at table, and can therefore give personal testimony to the charm of his manner and to his winning qualities as host. The pale, refined face, with soft beard and moustache and particularly full, expressive eyes, which in the House of Commons had seemed to me almost saturnine, was now lighted by a kindly smile, and his

great concern seemed to be that everyone should feel happy and at ease. His courtesy struck me as being of the old school—it was so very polished; and his soft voice and aristocratic bearing were as far removed as it is possible to imagine from the popular idea of the Irish agitator.

America was quite a new experience to me, for though I had been born in the Southern hemisphere and the Pacific was familiar enough, I had not yet crossed the Atlantic. It was rather a rough passage, I remember, but the three of us—Mr. McCarthy, my husband and myself—were good sailors, and when not eating or sleeping, we lived on deck. Mr. McCarthy delighted in the great grey-green billows of the Atlantic. His love for the sea was a passion. He used often to tell me of how in his boyhood he had got to look upon that grey water as almost his native element, and he would shake his head reproachfully when I vaunted the superiority of the blue southern ocean, which I knew better than he.

Looking over our notebook of the American voyage, I find several passages of descriptive writing by his hand. It was a point of friendly dispute between us that whereas, in his own work, he invariably trusted to memory and declared that he needed no notes for the backgrounds of his pictures, I maintained that description of scenery cannot have the same vividness when written from memory as when a sketch is taken on the spot. I now feel that this is merely a question of brain-registration, but, at that time, I was trying to convert him to my theory, and we would set each other exercises—after the method of Flaubert and of that prescribed by George Eliot in 'Theophrastus Such,'—in the art of portraying in words exactly what our eyes beheld. It is not so easy as one might imagine, and the painter with his palette and box of colours has certainly an advantage over the artist in words.

Mr. McCarthy said it was no use his attempting to write in that way, and I dare say he was right and that it was very presumptuous of me to try to impress upon him the value of notebooks. Perhaps, however, it may be interesting to the literary novice if I copy one or two of his bits from our sketch-book of that voyage.

'Two hours after noon, and the steamer is making towards the sun, which streams round the bow of the vessel and full over the waves, giving them the look of molten lead or silver. Across the wide stretch of sea, where the sunlight falls, one sees no hue of green or blue, or even pale grey, but only this molten—rather this melting-lead and silver—silver in some lights, lead in others, but always glittering waves of streaming, tumbling metal in fusion. Then, outside the limit of that sun-tipped surface, the familiar green and grey and blue and foamy white. . . .'

Again:

Sept. '87. On board the *Britannic.*

'On Deck.—The sky soft blue with white fleecy clouds—dark blue overhead, very light and faint on the horizon; the clouds, soft masses, sometimes like cotton wool; sometimes floating islets, with cones of light like snow-peaks rising out of vapour. . . . Wind enough to ruffle the sea all over. On the far horizon, the little crests of foam seem almost motionless and sometimes appear curiously like quiet flocks of sheep browsing on an autumn common.

'Now, the sea is steel colour, except for the foam, and on each wave, just near the foam-crest, where the sunlight falls upon it, a light gleam as of transparent jasper.

'The deck is crowded with passengers and covered, or nearly so, with a double row of deck-chairs, in which are ladies made up like mummies in tightest wrappings of rugs, shawls and all manner of coverings; of some of them one can see nothing but eyes.

'Crossing at intervals two narrow bridges, one reaches the bow of the ship. There, best of all, one gets an idea of the vastness of the sea and the smallness of the great steamer. You stand at the extreme end, where there is only room for two or three to stand; you could stretch out your hands and touch

both bulwarks—and the bulwarks are low.—And there before you, around you, is the Atlantic. The sensation is as if one were afloat in some little raft in mid-ocean.

'On the saloon deck, amid the crowding passengers, you seem to be in a floating city: the ocean is not part of your thoughts, does not seem to absorb you, hardly seems to concern you. But, at the bow, you are alone on the ocean—alone with the ocean.'

Here is the note of a melodramatic effect which struck him greatly as we were leaving the wharf at Liverpool:

'Under the shelter of the dock-shed, by the side of which our steamer was moored, a crowd of parting friends had assembled. They had left the steamer at the sound of the warning-bell. Then the vessel warped round about to steal out of the dock. Suddenly, the great gate of the shed was shut to, and the sad faces, the forced smiles, the saluting hands, the waving handkerchiefs were all blotted out for us on board. One could not help thinking, amid the emotions of leaving for a new world, that there was surely a good suggestion for a sensational scene at the end, say, of the first act of a melodrama. Suppose, for example, some young lover having suddenly the knowledge that danger threatens his sweetheart who is on board the steamboat. No one can say what hated rivalry may not be equal to in the way of dynamite and clockwork. He struggles through the crowd of friends determined to leap on board and give warning to everyone of the impending catastrophe; and just as he has fought his way to the boat and is preparing to take his leap, the great gate closes upon him and cuts him off, and the vessel with her fated freight steams out of the dock.—Ah, well! The heroine will be saved somehow. It may be on a raft or it may be on a desert island—but she will be saved somehow.' Sept. '86.

And here is a little study of a waiter, who was a source of amusement to us all:

'When we asked what sort of things there were for breakfast, the waiter put out his palms in a deprecating, contemptuous manner. . . . "Oh, the regular sort of thing, sir—chops, steaks, 'am and heggs—nothing that *you* would care about."'

In words and bearing the waiter conveyed, unmistakably, two things—his respect and admiration for the distinguished passenger for whom nothing was good enough, and his utter contempt for the inadequate arrangements for that distinguished passenger's comfort. If he refused soup at dinner, the steward behind would mutter audibly in a tone of melancholy conviction :

' " No, no, sir. I knew *you* wouldn't care about that " ; and whatever dish was ordered, he remarked invariably : " Well, yes, sir. I don't see that you can do anything better—in the circumstances." '

Once we ordered cigars, and the steward promptly questioned :

' " Haven't you got any cigars of your own, sir ? "
' " No, are there none on board ? " was the rejoinder.
' " Well, yes, sir—what they *call* cigars. *You* won't like them." '

Going back on our arrival in America and the first great week or so in New York, I have one definite and abiding impression—that of interviewers. From the time we beheld the long, low shores of Manhattan Island, pressmen swarmed from tugs and boats and around the hapless politician, who met them all with his usual composed and gentle courtesy. The *New York Herald*, in the shape of a suave, dapper, iron-grey gentleman whom we all got to know very well indeed during our stay, guessed—I found that people did then, in America, sometimes ' guess '—Mr. McCarthy would be surprised at the reception prepared for him, and, producing a notebook, requested permission to ask him a few questions. The *New York Herald* won the reporters' race. Other representatives of, apparently, all the New York papers ran him close. My husband and I watched the proceedings with amusement, coming in now and then for some passing

attention as insignificant companions of the Patriot. The *New York Herald* guessed that we also would be surprised—and we were.

Steam-tenders and boats drew up alongside like a fleet of catamarans at Aden. A fat Catholic priest clambered up the gangway followed by a line of black-coated gentlemen, the foremost of whom flourished an address. Immediately on them, came another deputation led by a lean man, fair, of military aspect with an eagle nose, fiery eyes, and a stubbly chin.

'That's Colonel F——,' explained my friendly reporter. 'He's the man that's managed it all. He's a very distinguished man is Colonel F——. *He*'s head of this deputation.'

The deputation—it seemed to me that there must be several deputations, so numerous were the addresses flying round—had, to a man, the keen, alert expression of subdued enthusiasm, the distinctly American 'all there' look tempered by Irish emotionalism, and the inevitable seedy black frock coat and pot hat which a gradually increasing experience taught me to associate with the 'local man,' whether in Great Britain or elsewhere. It did things in style, that deputation. It brought Mr. McCarthy the offer of a magnificent suite of rooms, of carriages, banquets, and an official permit to pass the Customs without having his luggage examined.

'The Irish Party gets a deal of sympathy over here,' observed the reporter. 'It has the sympathy of the Republic. Now that the Democrats are in, the sympathy has great significance. Why, these are compliments, you may say from the United States Government to Mr. McCarthy'—and he indicated certain other documentary marks of appreciation which the deputation was exhibiting to our distinguished friend. 'It was the Government that let Colonel F—— have the steamer to meet Mr. McCarthy.'

'We've been expecting you all day, Mr. McCarthy,'

cried the Colonel. 'It was said that the *Britannic* was to be in at one o'clock, and we had the steam-tug ready. Then it was telegraphed she wouldn't be here to-night, and so we went back again. If it hadn't been for the uncertainty, there'd have been a lot more of us.'

I thought that perhaps it was as well there weren't any more of them. The gentlemen of the Press gathered round Mr. McCarthy as a hive of bees surrounds its queen. Under the mistaken impression that he might dispose of the reporters at one stroke, he allowed himself to be conducted to the saloon and there interviewed by all collectively. Vain hope. The deputation knew it, and came to the rescue, and at last Mr. McCarthy, my husband and myself were put into a carriage: 'Hoffman House. Four dollars. All paid,' cried Colonel F——, and we rattled off, over and beneath and among the network of iron rails and wires, up through the city of New York.

A fresh body of newspaper men was at the hotel. One very important journal was already in possession of the sitting-room. 'Sitting-room' is too humble a designation for the gorgeous apartment presented by the deputation. In the course of a few minutes that one journal had gathered to itself half a dozen other journals; and when that seven departed, there came other and still other sevens. Mr. McCarthy's voice grew faint, but the interviewers lingered on. We were starving, but the interviewers had apparently determined that while there was any 'copy' to be got, the hero of the occasion should not eat nor sleep until he had provided it. They penetrated to the dining-room and punctuated with questions the mouthfuls of food he was able to snatch. The last of them, for that day, announced himself at 11.30 P.M. The first of them on the next day was, I heard, waiting at the door of Mr. McCarthy's bedroom for the great man to awake.

For several days the pressmen were a besieging army. Then the assailing forces dwindled to two or three ' specially detailed ' reporters who paid morning and evening calls as a doctor does to patients in a critical condition. Outside, however, the interviewers lurked in unexpected holes and corners like beasts of prey waiting to pounce. We never went anywhere with our friend—to bookstall, post-office, in the elevated railway or the tram-cars—that there did not step forward a person with a notebook and the modest request that Mr. McCarthy would oblige him with thirty seconds' worth of information concerning his views and his plans.

And then there was the stream, which never stopped, of callers that were not interviewers, technically speaking, and who, while we sat looking on in the gorgeous sitting-room, afforded my husband and me much interest and amusement —American politicians, Irish Home Rulers, lecture agents, political economists, novelists, poets, essayists, actors, monied folk, impoverished folk, fashionable folk, literary and artistic folk—all with axes of their own to grind—male and female cranks, child prodigies, enthusiastic young women—there was no end of them. Truly, a revelation of what it is to be a popular public visitor in America.

' Well, Mr. McCarthy, sir, I congratulate you. You've had a send-off and no mistake,' remarked the doyen of the Press people—he who had won the race to the steamer. ' There's only two things in America,' he went on—' dollars and notoriety, and if you don't turn all this into dollars, why your head is not set on square.'

He turned to me. ' I guessed *you*'d be surprised. Well, I guess *I*'m surprised. If we pressmen go on at this cumulative rate, the locusts of Egypt will be nothing in comparison with them by the time you reach Boston.'

The great night came when Mr. McCarthy was to give

his first lecture in the Academy of Music in New York. My husband and I were very nervous lest his voice should not fill the immense place, and I wondered how he himself could face the ordeal so composedly, knowing that the interviewers had given him no time that day for rest and preparation. That evening we all dined together at the public restaurant, and set off together, and even then he had not a quarter of an hour's solitude in which to collect his thoughts, but laughed and chatted with us after his usual fashion. Our fears deepened when that modest figure, almost undistinguished but for the fine head, stood alone on the platform and faced the vast assemblage gathered to hear him. It seemed impossible that his voice could carry to the limits of that immense and closely packed place. I had heard Mr. McCarthy speak in the House of Commons, I had heard him make one of his felicitous after-dinner speeches, I had heard him lecture in a big English hall—but never to such an enormous crowd as this.

I need not have feared, however. After the opening sentence or two, the orator's words rang out clearly and impressively, and success was assured. He gripped his hearers, and when he had finished, the ovation he received was a good augury for his further mission. He himself admitted that it had been an ordeal, but his manner certainly did not convey that impression. He never faltered for a word, and he pleaded the Cause of Ireland with an eloquence and pathos that seemed to bring conviction to the minds of his hearers.

The charm of Mr. McCarthy's public speaking lay in his command of language and the spontaneity of his utterance. He has sometimes said to me that the greatest impediment he had found in his career was his own 'fatal facility.' He wrote and spoke with so little effort that there was no need for him to take trouble in preparing his speeches.

While in New York, my husband and I went with Mr. McCarthy to stay for a night with Mr. and Mrs. Cyrus Field at their country house on the Hudson. The trouble which saddened Mr. Field's later years had not then come upon him, and this visit stands out as one of the pleasantest memories of our American trip. I have a vivid recollection of Mr. Field and Mr. McCarthy discussing the laying of the first Atlantic cable, as we sat in our host's library which was lined with water-colour drawings of the famous Cable expedition.

'I don't care about pictures of Madonnas and such-like,' Mr. Field said, 'I like my pictures to recall something I've done.'

My husband asked him why the cable had broken in the beginning, and he pulled forth his watch chain where, set parallel to each other, were portions of the two cables, the first one having been much smaller than the second which finally served the purpose.

He pointed out the difference and explained why the second and stronger one had been more successful.

'When people ask me that question,' he said, 'I always show them these : it's the best answer I can give them. Yet Robert Stephenson said the thing was impossible,' he went on, 'and that the weight of the Atlantic would crush the cable to a million fragments. My reply to that was, that in our dredgings we had brought up the most minute and delicate shells and they were not crushed into a million fragments.'

Mr. Cyrus Field was above all things a business man, a man of action, yet there was something positively dreamy and poetic in his way of going over his tale of struggle and failure and final conquest, as on that autumn evening by the glowing wood fire, with the twilight shadows deepening in the library, he narrated the story of the Atlantic Cable.

He told us of how the cable was at first completed and delivered messages, and then suddenly became silent, none could say why, and how unbelievers and enemies insisted that it had never spoken at all and that the messages, purporting to have thrilled through its wires, had simply been concoctions at the other end. And of how such men refused to be convinced, even though it was shown that the cable brought news to England which could not have been anticipated and which could have been brought by no other agency known to man. He told us of the successive snappings of the new cable in mid-ocean and of the expeditions to find the severed strands down in the deeps of the Atlantic, and how the grappling-irons, feeling cautiously along that submarine floor, touched at last the missing cords and drew them up to the surface. This is bygone history, and the old methods seem almost archaic now that wireless telegraphy flashes its messages from ship to ship at sea. But, at that time, the laying of the Atlantic Cable was one of man's greatest achievements in subduing to his use the forces of Nature. And then, too, how must it have been for those whose hearts, fortunes and reputations were staked on the working of that cable! And the cable *would* keep on snapping asunder in mid-Atlantic, and only one season in each year allowed any chance of its recovery and reunion.

At New York my husband and I parted company with Mr. McCarthy, who went to Canada, while we did a trip to Niagara and one or two places in the nearer West. We joined him again later at Boston and heard him lecture at the Faneuil Hall where he had as enthusiastic a reception as at New York. In Boston he departed from politics a little and lectured on a literary subject which to my mind suited him better than the political one. Boston looked charming in its autumn colouring. I fell in love with the Common and the brick houses in their dress of Virginian

creeper, with Harvard College and Longfellow's house and the street in which Emerson dwelt. . . . Ah! Emerson! That was one of the chances of my life missed, for then, Emerson was out of Boston.

Beyond all, I fell in love with the strange, romantic, and altogether delightful personality of John Boyle O'Reilly, patriot, poet, athlete, ex-convict, man of social gifts. He was our showman in the drive round by Harvard College, and the talk between him and Mr. McCarthy, both devoted Irish Nationalists, both literary men of extreme culture—one of the old world and one of the new—was most agreeable listening. Mr. Boyle O'Reilly died, I think, in 1890, and a word about him here may not come amiss. Mr. McCarthy had for him the deepest admiration and regard, and it was he who told me Boyle O'Reilly's curious history.

In his youth, O'Reilly had run away from home and enlisted in the Tenth Hussars; and, when the Fenian insurrection broke out, O'Reilly, who took part in it, was tried and sentenced to death. The sentence was, through the interest of his friends, commuted to transportation for life, and the young man was sent out as a convict to Western Australia. There he contrived to make friends with a tribe of blacks whom he describes in his novel 'Moondyne' as a much finer race than any Australian blacks I myself ever knew; and, in spite of my personal affection for the blacks, I cannot help thinking that his gratitude for the service they rendered him led him to overrate their place in the scale of civilisation. Mr. O'Reilly and I had some friendly passages at arms on this score. However, with the help of the natives he escaped from the convict gang and put out to sea in an open boat, to be picked up after many dangers by an American trading ship. He landed in Massachusetts, penniless, except for a small subscription that had been got up for him on board, and gradually worked himself into a

unique position in society and literature. The editor of an important Catholic journal, he was also the most popular man in the social circles of Boston. Nevertheless, it was impossible for him to cross into Canada, for there he would have run the risk of arrest as an escaped prisoner.

I have before me an interesting memento of John Boyle O'Reilly and of our visit with my literary colleague to Boston. It is a menu card of a great banquet given in Boston to Mr. McCarthy, and, on the evening of the banquet, Mr. O'Reilly sent it to me at my hotel with a pint bottle of champagne and a basket of beautiful flowers. A portrait of Mr. McCarthy, printed in blue on white satin, is fastened on to the outside of the card with red ribbon, and beneath the portrait Mr. O'Reilly wrote the following little note :

'*Dear Mrs. Praed,—We want you to drink with us*, 100 *Irishmen of Boston, Mr. Justin McCarthy's health to-night.*

'*With great respect,*

'*Very truly yours,*

'*John Boyle O'Reilly.*'

'*Oct.* 11.'

The memory of one delightful day in Massachusetts stands vividly out from the American background. It was a day on which Mr. McCarthy and I made a pious literary pilgrimage to the shrine of Nathaniel Hawthorne's Old Salem. We were the guests of a noted scientist—the late Professor Morse—among whose many claims to distinction was the possession of the largest and most valuable collection of Japanese pottery in the world.

Of course we went first of all to see the collection, and the Professor humorously described his quest after specimens—the digging of twelve-hundred-year-old pieces out of a Japanese domen, the pursuit of a set of five rare cups : the infinite pains and adventure with which he secured examples of each kind of pottery made in each Japanese province since

the beginning of time. For him, every pot had its own history and its separate individuality. He pointed out the exquisite grey of the old Satsuma, the marvellous glaze of the ancient Tokio ware. He talked with reverent ecstasy about the ' feeling ' in the quaint tea-jars.

And then we were driven between the rows of red and gold maples on through the old-fashioned streets to the place where the witches had been tried ; and we beheld the pincers by which, according to tradition, the witches were tested. And we saw the old Custom House described in the preface to ' The Scarlet Letter,' and also the house where Hawthorne lived, and that in which the Peabodys lived, and where Nathaniel wooed his wife. Last of all we went to the quiet by-road leading to the harbour edge, where stood the rusty wooden building with its acutely peaked gables—three of them visible—and which is generally declared to have been the original of Hawthorne's ' House of the Seven Gables.'

No great stretch of imagination was needed to make the romance real and living. There was something distinctly Hawthornesque in the mellow October day, the dreamy haze on the water of that lonely harbour where only a few fishing boats were rocking; in the neglected garden which looked melancholy and shadowed as if brooded over by some evil omen, and in the all-pervading quietude of Salem, the Pilgrim Fathers' bourne.

We parted in Boston, my husband and I working along to Washington, and returning to England well before Christmas, while Mr. McCarthy started his further lectures in Canada.

CHAPTER IV

FROM THE CARS

Mr. McCarthy's letters during his American lecturing tour were written chiefly during long journeys in the railway-cars. When not dealing with our collaboration work—disquisitions of no interest to the general reader—they are mainly a record of wearisome travelling and of orations delivered at provincial towns under the guidance of his 'conductor' from the lecturing bureau—'the faithful Whittredge' as he styles him—a most courteous, kindly gentleman, whom he always held afterwards in sincere friendship.

Mr. McCarthy writes from Canada in the early part of his tour:

Oct. '86. 'I launch this into space in the hope that it may find you before many days. It isn't much to send but it will tell you that I am at work on our story. . . . It will be a fortnight to-morrow since I saw you last. I have been receiving all manner of deputations and addresses—have been staying at private houses and find that on the whole, one is better off—as far as work goes—in hotels. But the cars are the most sure place after all. . . . We are so far asunder here that it takes days to interchange a letter; and yet when you have really left America I shall feel all lonely. . . . I miss you much when I go anywhere or see anything concerning which notes ought to be taken. You always keep me up to that kind of work which I am apt to neglect. I shall have so many things to

tell you of when we meet. I believe Derry is mine though I have had no news direct.

'. . . I have pleaded for a short sleep now in order to escape my local friends and to write to you. I will send the MS. from Quebec. . . .

'My life goes on in the same way—speeches, banquets, incessant—oh incessant!—callers . . . but I rather like the unending change of place.

'. . . I know my scraps of letters must seem meagre, but you will know under what conditions they have to be written. I am hampered and hedged in every way. I am dreadfully weary of my surroundings, my local men, my lectures and all the rest—sick of playing the part of great public man.'

The tale might indeed easily become monotonous; and again I make free use of the blue pencil. My literary colleague had not time in these days to produce literary letters.

On the cars to Quebec, Nov. 4, '86.

'We are crossing the dreary stretches of Lower Canada. The day is heavy and dark; the cars rush and rattle and rock and leap like a ship in a storm. "Heavy sea to-day, sir," the conductor humorously observes as we stagger about. Meanwhile, how to get our work done? I will send you all I have from Quebec to-morrow. Write or wire to me at once what part you will take up next. I shall go on with *Champion* and *Bellarmin*.[1] I don't think even you—after all your New York experiences—quite understand how my time is eaten up now that the long night journeys have set in for a while, but I will snatch every moment. Alas! nearly all my work, such as it is, has to get done in that sort of way. I am refusing an offer from the *New York Herald* received yesterday to write a series of letters about the Irish in America—an offer in many ways tempting but which I have not allowed to tempt me because I must give whatsoever time I can to our joint work. I am going to give the *Herald* people the real reason why I decline their offer—the necessary precedence of "The Ladies Gallery" over all other work for the present.'

Toronto, Nov. 21, '86.

'I am staying here in the house of Edward Blake the leader of the Opposition in the Dominion parliament, and we had a great dinner-party last night; and I dined with the

[1] Characters in our joint novel.

Archbishop to-day and I have had interviews to no end and you know all the sort of things.'

Peterboro', Ontario. Nov. 25, '86.

'I send you some pages of a scene. Put it in wherever you think best. Touch it up and brighten it all you can. You will see the idea. . . . I think I shall send you next, *Tressel's* motion in the House. We have had some rather hard travel and hideously early hours these few days back, and the Canadian trains are very slow and in every way very bad. This will find you, I hope, safely settled in Talbot Square.'

Imperial Hotel, Galt, Ontario, Dec. 3, '86.

'I send you twelve pages of the dinner-party at *Lord Saxon's*.[1] Touch it up—and can you put a name to Lord S.'s father? Put in a good deal of *Mary*. I hope I shall soon hear that you are well over the fatigue of your journey and that you are settled down to home life and literary work. I have nothing particular to tell you about myself—the same lectures, railways, audiences. I am quite well despite it. . . .'

New York, Dec. '86.

'I am in the Hoffman House. I deliver an address to the Nineteenth Century Club to-night, and go back to Philadelphia to-morrow. I have delivered fifty-four lectures, not including banquet speeches, or replies to addresses. I am to deliver a hundred altogether. I perform my duty with a mechanical heroism which amuses me. To-day it is streaming with rain, for all the world, like a very wet December day in London.

'My address to the Nineteenth Century Club went off very well. There was a great crowd. I talked with Mrs. Sherwood afterwards, and with Heron Allen and lots of people. I enclose a pretty little letter from Miss S——, daughter of Sir J. S., uncle of the poet and member of the House. You will smile at the cool way in which she puts the book—"The Right Honourable"—all down to *me*. A young man would probably put it all down to *you*.'

Adams' House, Boston, Dec. '86.

'I scratch off a line to send with three letters for you and Campbell which appear to have been waiting here since you left Boston. I hope they are not very important. I also send you a letter from another fair admirer. She, too, as you will see, ignores you in the calmest manner. I am rushing on to Portland, Maine, in a few minutes.'

Adams' House, Boston, Dec. 22, '86.

'I enclose fourteen slips. Vivify it all you can. I have seen Boyle O'Reilly and catechised him about "Moondyne" on your behalf. He was delighted to know that you took so

[1] In our novel.

much interest in the book. He stands by every tree and stone of his scenery, every word of his natives. He says he lived among those people and with them exclusively for a year and a half and knew them as friends. He told me lots of things, too long to tell here. He says Western Australia is a quite different region from the rest of the continent, and of much older conformation, and that the natives are of a different order altogether. He spoke most warmly of you and sent all manner of kind regards. I lecture here to-morrow on "Modern Fiction, Real and Ideal"—the first literary lecture yet and probably the only one except for a lecture here and there on the British Parliament. It is all the "Cause of Ireland." '

Adams' House, Dec. 26 '86.

'I have been thinking over your suggestions about the Conservative intriguings (in our novel) and I will try to act on your ideas. *Tressel* shall be the agent on both sides—that is for *Champion* and for the one or two advanced Tories of the Carnarvon type who are willing to consider some sort of reform in the House of Lords. . . . I can do this in a very realistic fashion. . . . We shall need a new character—a sort of Carnarvon. . . . I like your suggestion about the Protestant and Catholic antagonism of feeling. . . . I can supplement all you have done in that part. But, as you say, it is maddening to think that a delay of three weeks must intervene before I hear that you know what I am going to do. . . .

'I enclose an account of my last night's lecture, chiefly for the sake of the personal description. The report is the merest rubbish—sheer meaningless nonsense. I also enclose an interview which will amuse you.

'Madame Modjeska is here. After my own show was over last night, I went to see some of hers. It was a dreary, doleful play all climaxes and anti-climaxes, so that even when the hero and heroine lay dead we didn't feel quite sure that they weren't going to be alive again and begin some new tragic adventure. Madame Modjeska was utterly thrown away on it. I called on her to-day at the Vendôme. I delivered a discourse to the Round Table, a literary club, here the other night. Colonel Higginson (author of "Atlantic Essays") presided. I give two or three lectures in this neighbourhood—Cambridge, Concord, etc.—and then begin working my way out westward. I shan't go very far west—not much beyond Chicago. I will try to keep sending you copy as regularly

as I can. If you could give me an idea about something to happen in our East End expedition, it would still reach me in time; I shall put off dealing with that part for the present. The enclosed letter which I have just received from our old friend the photographer, of the Kilcoursi family, will amuse you perhaps. I mustn't forget *Monsignor Valmy* [1] and the portrait of Mary Stuart. Monsignor wears a long dark robe and a square cap, a Roman collar and a long gold chain with a large gold cross attached. We can verify this later on and put in a little more detail if need be. The portrait of Mary Stuart you might describe somewhat in this fashion: "It was only a head and part of the neck. By some odd chance the painter had given no touch of bust or suggestion of drapery; one only saw the head and neck of a woman in what appeared to be a recumbent posture. The mind was painfully brought to the idea of a severed head; it seemed a painting symbolic of Mary's fate. It was a beautiful face with something boyish in its beauty." You can touch all this up and make the face like Mary Beaton's. I have been interrupted I don't know how often, my very dear colleague, in writing this, and now the time is pretty near at hand when I shall have to start for my lecture five miles off. Goodnight—goodbye.'

The New Year finds him returned to Boston, for further lectures in that place.

Adams' House, Boston, Jan. 2, '87.

'I don't send you any MS. to-day, dear colleague, although I have some ready—my reason that it is Sunday, and one can't register a letter here, and I don't like sending "copy" unregistered. I will send you some in a day or two—the whole of the political intrigue business. You remember our calling on Oliver Wendell Holmes one day here? Yesterday I received the enclosed packet of letters, which give their own story. I think you will like to see them. Keep them for me until I return—they might possibly serve as an incident in that "Book of Memories" about which you and I have talked sometimes.[2] I shall accept his invitation. I shall

[1] A character in our novel.

[2] I do not seem to have these letters, which were probably returned to Mr. McCarthy; and cannot remember what they were about.

Photo. Holland & Roberts, Boston.

be away in the West somewhere at the end of January. I leave Boston this evening and shall travel all night—to Oswego, and I don't expect to see Boston again till the end of my tour—if even then. I came in yesterday from Concord —Emerson's Concord—where I had been lecturing, I was banqueted yesterday by the " Papyrus," a literary club—and afterwards had a reception at the St. Botolph. They were all very nice and kind to me. An old acquaintance—B. K.— was at both places. He talked loudly at dinner about the British aristocracy, but he marred the impressiveness of his remarks by several times speaking of the " Duke " of Salisbury, and having to be mildly put right by some Americans. Then he got into a dispute about Frederick the Great with a professor of History; and he would talk about Maria Theresa in connection with " Silistria " instead of Silesia. However, he made many friendly enquiries about you and Campbell, and sent ever so many kind remembrances and regards.

' The lecturing has been going on in the old fashion. The audiences keep up well. The subject is in five cases out of six " The Cause of Ireland." I have, in sober earnest, done some good for that cause here. I have brought it to the understanding of Americans whom other Irishmen perhaps could not reach so well. That is something.'

' On the Cars, Oswego, N.Y. to Norwich N.Y., Jan. '87.

' Thick, deep, dazzling white snow and still more dazzling sunshine all round us as we sweep along. . . . I send you eighteen pages. . . . In the part at the end, do you think you could put in a few vivid descriptive lines about the service and the singing in Farm Street—something sympathetic ? '

' Here, I found yours awaiting me. I should like to write you a long letter but find it hard to get time to myself. We travel every day and I speak every night; and to write much in the cars—indeed to write much anywhere with a pen, is, to me, so long accustomed to the typewriter, rather a severe physical labour. In the cars too, somebody is always coming up and talking.' Norwich, Jan. '87.

' . . . It is very wearying, the lonely monotony of this kind of life—all the more lonely because one is hardly ever alone. It gets upon the nerves sometimes.'

'Union Depôt Hotel, Jan 10, 1887.

'I am writing this at a little wayside railway station while we wait for a belated train. It is now noon of Monday and we have been travelling since six o'clock Sunday evening with such frequent and curiously interpolated change of trains as to render sleep impossible. The country is swallowed up in snow—all landscape is gone—and the trains are all knocked out of time. . . . The other night I saw a lovely strange effect of snow and moon—I never saw anything like it before. . . . Broad quiet roads lined with trees, every branch made crystal with snow—so far of course all familiar and commonplace. But the moon was soft, silvery and summery—not steely and wintery. The air was absolutely still and light feathery mist was filling the sky with what seemed an almost impalpable silver dust. For a moment I almost thought it was snowing in light infinitesimal snow-flakes. But no, there was no snow—only this silver mist—this spreading soft curtain of silver dust. It was a summer moon and a summer mist over a winter landscape. It was—I don't know how or why—unspeakably touching—went home to the spirit and to the heart. I thought how you would have enjoyed it.

'I have been going along very well—addressing chiefly American audiences and therefore having no bands, banners, or gorgeous addresses—for which I need hardly tell you I was not sorry. But I have the attentions of the local man all the same. Thank Heaven, he can't be at this lonely wayside station!'

Jan. 13, '87. 'I am beginning this letter at the house of the President of Oberlin College, Ohio, where I spent last night. I lectured on the Cause—and had a fine audience and much sympathy. An audience purely American. My host, who is a clergyman, said family prayers this morning and prayed among other things for the success of "Thy servant who is now happily here in our midst and to whom Thou hast given responsibility for the cause of his country." I felt much touched, curiously humbled more than exalted. He is the Reverend Doctor Fairchild with a wife, several daughters, a son-in-law and a grandchild—a kindly simple, American family with antique ascetic habits but full of good humour and without a gleam

of doubt crossing their minds on any subject whatever of the here or the hereafter.

'I go on to Cleveland this afternoon—quite a great city but where I fear we shall have a scanty audience owing to local quarrels. This is the only thing which has ever seriously affected our audiences—the Irish are dissatisfied if I have been secured by an American association; and the American associations are not always strong enough to do without the Irish. Then in some places the Irishmen are rather extreme and I do not care to be too much associated with them. These however are but small troubles and of rare occurrence.

'The weather saved us at Cleveland, dear colleague—saved our credit at least. There was heavy snow and then, about an hour before the lecture, there came a tremendous downpour of rain which turned the snowy streets into rivers, and then the rain began to freeze as fast as it fell and foot-passengers in the streets began to fall as fast as it did! So we had an audience of five hundred in a hall that would well hold five thousand. Everyone said it was the weather and thought it wonderful that I had even five hundred on such a night. Therefore history cannot tell whether the thing would have been a failure if the night had been fine. I think it would but I didn't feel called on to say so. . . . It was all a local quarrel. Man, according to Lord Palmerston, is a quarrelling animal.'

'I began this in Akron, Ohio, as you will see, and I am finishing it in Cleveland to which I have got back on my way to other places. I enclose you two cuttings from local papers which will amuse you. We had a full house at Akron—a town of not more than 2500 people—and a very attentive audience, chiefly American. Just now I have had an interview of more than an hour with a man from Chicago come to implore me to try to compose some quarrel between the Irish Nationalists in Chicago when I got there. But I couldn't possibly attempt to arbitrate in a dispute of that kind. I couldn't make out its rights and wrongs in the time and would have no right to interfere even if I could. I only tell you this as an example of the sort of interruptions one often has which one could hardly avoid. Jan. '87.

'I was so sorry to hear of Lord Iddesleigh's death. I had known him for some years and he was always nice to me. Of

late I had not seen much of him. The last time I had any talk with him I think was at a dinner party at Lady Maidstone's towards the end of the season. . . . We are simply enveloped in monotonous snow—one day very much like another—very little sun of late, only grey sky and white earth. . . .'

Jan. '87. 'I am beginning this in Dayton, a large Ohio town. I am not quite certain when and where I shall finish it. This afternoon I go on to a town called Troy in this state—not the much bigger Troy of N.Y. state. I have sailed past the shores of *the* Troy of Homer's "Iliad" and seen the mound of Achilles—or what bears that name—outlined against the sky. And I have been in the Troy of New York State where there is a hill that they have actually named Mount Ida! And now I am going into this third Troy! . . . To-morrow evening I am threatened with a banquet in Cincinnati and a reception at a literary club afterwards. They are making a great fuss about me in Cincinnati but I have had a long immunity from banquets and am therefore not entitled to complain. We have lately been going through a long monotonous succession of small towns with purely American audiences—sedate, intelligent, even appreciative, but solemnly undemonstrative and to whose minds the idea of anything in the shape of a banquet other than a church sociable has not yet occurred. . . .

'Oh! the monotony of the towns, the audiences, the solemn visitors, the talks before and after the lecture—and the snow! I have got to hate the sight of the snow. The winter has been for the most part strangely sunless for America, and we see thick, dull, grey skies and then the snow covering up and affecting all the landscape beneath. Then the accommodation in these small towns is wretched and the food is dreadful. I am not a grumbler about food now, am I?—but still! It is a relief to get to the big towns where one gets meals that he can eat. Now I have relieved my mind by that unheroic grumble and I shan't say any more. Here, in Dayton, I have the prospect of several successive days on which I shall really have a dinner!

'I have taken up this letter in Cincinnati. This is Sunday and I leave for Louisville, Kentucky, this afternoon. A busy day yesterday, as you will see by the cutting I enclose. Strange change of climate here! All bright sunshine yesterday when

we got in. To-day, just a London Sunday—dull, murky, rainy. Besides all the doings recorded in the paper, we looked into the theatre where the manager had asked me to accept a box, but we quickly fled for the audience would insist on cheering for me, until the principal actor had to stop in the middle of his performance and make a little speech in praise of me assuring the audience it was my particular wish that the performance should go on without further interruption ! '

' Just got your letter of the 10th. . . . I am writing this on the cars. I had to break off in the middle of a page and go to the train for a place called Bloomington where I lecture to-night. After the lecture, we take the cars again and travel all night and the greater part of to-morrow to a place called Michigan. I had a very busy time in Cincinnati, Louisville, and Indianopolis—as busy as the old New York days with banquets, addresses, deputations and callers, and have done very little of our work. I think I am glad you are going out so much. I don't like you to be worried over literary work.—Glad you met H. M. His has been a strange career. You will find him pictured in " The Fair Saxon," as *Mr. Halbert* (I think) . . . the London barrister who gets in for an Irish borough by talking the wildest Fenianism. . . . I was much interested in your description of Lady Colin Campbell. . . . ' Jan. 27, '87.

His allusions bring back the recollection of a pleasant dinner-party at the house of a prominent person in London social life, where Lady Colin, just emerged from her terrible ordeal in the divorce-case brought against her by her husband, was the most interesting guest of the evening. An ordeal which acquitted her in fact, but which left its mark upon a most attractive, highly intellectual, ambitious, and sorely fate-stricken woman, of whom in all the later years of her life—she died in 1911—nothing but good was spoken.

A brilliant and indeed tragic personality was that of Lady Colin Campbell. I have kept two vivid impressions of her. The first when in my drawing-room at an evening party

during the stress of feeling against the Irish after Gladstone's declaration of his Home Rule policy, she sang in her rich contralto, 'The Wearing of the Green.' I have heard some of my guests speak of the thrill that went through even the most 'Orange' breasts when she gave the refrain with all the emotion of an Irish woman and a faint touch of the Irish brogue.

> *'"Tis the most distressful country*
> *That ever has been seen*
> *They're hanging men——'*

And here came the momentary dramatic pause and the passionate inflexion, as the singer stood, with magnificent figure braced, dark head uplifted and dark eyes shining.

> *'They're hanging men—and women too—*
> *For the wearing of the Green.'*

The second impression of Lady Colin Campbell is as she stood by the fireplace on the evening of that dinner-party, dressed in black with some picturesque touches of white, and a white orchid in her bodice, nervously swaying a white feather fan. She was pale but for the slight flush on her cheekbones, a little wasted, her eyes deeper sunken, the beautiful face showing, too clearly, evidence of the strain of that merciless cross-examination; but brave, as she remained to the end. How angry it made me to hear a man's cynical comment upon the novel she wrote a little later before proving herself the clever journalist she afterwards became.

'Lady Colin had exhausted all her powers of imagination in the witness-box.'

The man who said that to me, then the æsthetic darling of London drawing-rooms, went not long afterwards through an infinitely shameful ordeal—in which he was *not* acquitted.

Over him, too, Death has drawn the curtain, and 'the rest is silence'—a favourite saying of Justin McCarthy's. There were, I remember, other interesting people at that dinner-party—among them Mr. Mallock, Sir Henry Thompson—whose octave dinner-parties used to be famous among men in those days. Laurence Oliphant—quaint, wrinkled, withered, with a large grey beard, looking as if he had lived among the Druids, but a delightfully original and 'other-world' dinner companion. I never saw him again, he was then on the point of starting for Haifa, and only a little later he died. Ouida was there likewise—an elfish being, not unlike her own 'Puck,' I thought. She had drab hair cut straight upon her forehead, and her voice, raised above every other in one of her characteristic passages of arms with somebody present, was shrill as that of the proverbial peacock.

But all this is a mere 'by the way,' and must be forgiven.

Going back to my literary colleague in the wilds of America:

'We have had some very poor audiences lately. American chiefly. I spent a night and part of a day at the town of Arun-Arbor, the seat of the university of this state—Michigan. Arun-Arbor is the *New Padua* of "Dear Lady Disdain." Most of the people I knew there are gone—scattered in one way or another. I had some curious reflections of my own as I stood on a little height over the river which I have described in "Dear Lady Disdain." The Burdick, Kalamazoo, Mich., Jan. 30, '87.

'This is Sunday and it is snowing heavily. After an interlude of two or three very fine spring-like days, we have got back to our snow. I have been writing all the morning—the pulling up of arrears of correspondence, dull business affairs and invitations to be the guest of several people in places where I shall only speak a single night. I won't, if I can help it, see anyone outside the lecture-hall. I have been receiving callers and instructing interviewers and so on—you know all the sort of thing. And, all the time, I kept thinking of

Sunday in London, of where I should probably be and of what I should be doing there about this time. My faithful Whittredge has a way of saying when we arrive, fate-impelled, at some dreadfully dull and forlorn place, "Don't the sight of this make you feel home-sick?" He is, I should say, a true New Englander.'

Jan. 30, '87. 'I send you a copy of a sort of pamphlet published about me by the Cincinnati managers who had charge of my lectures there the other day. As a specimen of puffery it will amuse you. Once I should have been ashamed of it; now I am getting bronzed and hardened and so I send it to you as a curiosity of American advertising and not as my own estimate of myself. I am looking for a letter from you. Your accounts of all your doings, the people you meet in London have infinite interest for me. I am very anxious to know what is said about "The Bond," I think the book has, even in the conventional sense, a strong moral purpose. I well remember the night I first read its earlier chapters and thought how powerful and also how painful it was. That was a Sunday and I had been dining at the Laboucheres' in Twickenham; and then we drove home and J. and C. went on to a party at Charles Wyndham's. I didn't go, but remained at home and read your MS. . . . Now I must close this up. There is a strike among the longshoremen of New York and, consequently, great difficulty in getting the steamers loaded, and alarmists come telling me that the Atlantic steamers will be delayed. If this does not go out this evening it may lose a boat—so goodbye.'

Russell House, Detroit, Mich., Feb. 1, '87. 'I send you a little chapter about our hero *Bellarmin* moving the adjournment. I have used, as you will see, some notes which you printed on the typewriter years ago—as it seems to me. I think it makes a bright little scene—dramatic and significant. . . .'

Feb. 2. 'And now I am in a little town called Hillsdale in Michigan where I lecture to-night. I had to break off this letter at Detroit yesterday and then came the lecture. We had a very good audience—handshaking and the presentation of a floral harp—that is, the form of a harp made in flowers—which I had to leave behind me, and this morning we had to leave Detroit at 6 and our train was delayed three hours by the snow, and, at last, here we are. I got yesterday your letter telling me all

about your ball and dear kindly Zen and Lady C. and the work you are doing and your views. . . .'

'Another change of scene. I had to break off my letter last evening, and this morning we left at a raw early hour on our way to Chicago, and here we are at Chicago still on our way and waiting for a train. To-night we travel all night and the snow makes every train uncertain. But before starting off for our night travel, we call a halt at Aurora, a place ninety miles off where I lecture this evening. So you see we are kept rushing about a good deal. These last few days have been rather trying. Never mind!' Jackson, Mich.

'In Chicago, my dear colleague, and much the New York business over again—as regards interviewers, callers, invitations, deputations and all the rest of it. I have been here two or three days. It is a sort of centre for some outlying towns, so that I shall have to return here next Saturday. I lecture in one of the outlying towns this evening, in Chicago itself to-morrow, and go to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, on Wednesday. The weather here is a happy combination of American frost and London fogs and is absolutely dreadful. Sallie [1] is here—she has timed her visit so as to pass a day or two with me. Her society is very pleasant when I have a chance of being able to talk to her, which is very rare for I have to go to so many places and to see so many people. To-day I am asked by a lawyer to go and see the condemned anarchists in prison—but I don't intend to go. One of my entertainers here, a lawyer, a sweet, kindly, gentle creature whom I like much, once killed a man—shot him dead! my friend was tried and acquitted. The man had published something offensive about my friend's wife—a clever literary woman. My friend met him and struck him; the other drew a pistol; so did my friend; shots were fired; my friend's shot killed the man. No one could blame my friend, but it seems odd to dine with a man and his wife and to think that your sweet, kindly host killed a man in a quarrel about your sweet, kindly hostess. Tremont House, Chicago, Feb. 7, '87.

'I have been pressed into a promise to do a series of short Parliamentary sketches for a Boston magazine called *The Youth's Companion*, which has a great circulation and for which some very eminent people on both sides of the Atlantic write. They pay good prices. If I do the sketches, I shan't

[1] Mrs. Sallie McCarthy—Mr. McCarthy's sister-in-law.

touch them till we have finished "The Ladies' Gallery." There is a report in the papers here that I have been prevailed on by a New York daily journal to stay in New York and write leaders for it at an immense salary. The report is not true. Likewise a report that I am going to marry a rich widow, which is not true. The only widow rich or poor whom I know this side of the Atlantic is Sallie McCarthy. . . .

'It seems strange that a few Sundays hence, if unkindly fates don't interpose, I may be ringing at the door of Talbot Square and asking if you are at home. . . .'

Depôt Hotel, Elkhart, Indiana, Feb. 9, '87.

'I am to lecture here to-night and take the train and travel back to Cleveland, Ohio, on my way back to Pittsburgh. I had to do the same thing last night after speaking at a place called Greencastle. I had to take the train and go to Chicago which I reached this morning early and from which I came on here. It doesn't really make much difference to me for I can sleep quite well in the cars. I am to be in Pittsburgh, Monday; Washington, Tuesday; next, Baltimore, and then one or two other places; and, finally, a farewell dinner and a farewell lecture in Boston. . . . I have written to engage passages homeward for the 5th March. . . . I have got your letter. . . . And so poor Philip Bourke Marston is dead and Lady T—— is married again! so runs the world away. It is a release I think for him—do you remember that evening he was at your house? I always thought Lady T. was inconsolable—but the inconsolables too are consoled!

Milwaukee, Feb. 10.

'We have just got here. We had a little mishap yesterday. Our first mishap. We failed to reach a place where I was to lecture, Janesville, Illinois. The heavy snow had been followed by terrible rains; the rivers swelled and swept away several railway bridges and we had perforce to stop halfway on our journey, and the Janesville audience had to be consoled with a telegraphic message that we couldn't come. We had a splendid house in Chicago on Tuesday and everything went well there. To-day we have been travelling since five this morning and it is now four in the afternoon for we had to go a long way round because of the broken bridges. I am going to try to get a little sleep before my lecture—or rather before a reception by the Press Club of Milwaukee which precedes the lecture. The Press has been very nice to me all through and I could not refuse the invita-

tion of the Milwaukee Press Club. But, all the same, I feel tired. We return to Chicago on Saturday. This is all about myself, and you will think perhaps that I am growing egotistic, but I fancy you will like to know how I am getting on and what I am doing and so I allow myself to talk a little over my own affairs. But I am looking out all the same to hear soon from you and to get some news of your doings and about your work. I've not had a chance of doing much to the L.G.[1] The Chicago time was one of prolonged interview or reception and I am going back there for some more interviews and receptions. But it does not matter much now: the whole expedition is drawing to an end. By this day four weeks I expect to have been several days at sea. I didn't go to see the prisoned Anarchists at Chicago. Of course I wouldn't, but a friend who did go, told me that Spies, one of those under sentence of death, told him he was a devoted student of my writings!'

'I have received your two latest letters—got them both in Chicago close together, for the earlier one had been so long reaching me owing to my wanderings that I was beginning to wonder; but it was welcome. Doane House, Champaign, Ill., Feb. 14, '87.

'We have a very hard week of travelling just before us—the hardest I think we have put in, and my faithful Whittredge is much alarmed because I have preluded the week by taking a rather heavy cold. In vain I assured him that my colds never come to anything—indeed I have had fewer colds this winter than I usually have in a London winter—but he shakes his head and says: "One can't be too careful in such a climate as this." And all the time he has a cold eleven times worse than mine. So I tell him and ask: "Why don't *you* take care?" Whereat he dolefully rejoins: "*I* have not to make a long speech every night."

'Well, I have got through so far wonderfully, with little trouble in way of health. But the expedition was for the most part very dreary, depressing and gloomy. The long monotonous daily journeys through a country made uniform with the snow; the towns where there was nothing to be seen—the gradual inevitable extinction of all curiosity as to new places under such conditions—all this was wearying to a degree which you would hardly understand. . . .

'I went to see President Cleveland at the White House in

[1] 'The Ladies' Gallery.'

February—day after Ash Wednesday—1887. General Collins came with me and my faithful Whittredge. There were a great many people waiting in the ante-chamber but we were not kept waiting ; we were shewn in at once. The President did not impress me. He is stout, short, bourgeois in appearance and gave me no idea of force of character or command. We did not stay long as there were so many waiting to see him. He said would I come and dine at the White House but I had to leave for Baltimore that same evening. The day before, I was taken to the Capitol and was invited to take a place in either House. I was first brought into the House of the Representatives.

'Did you ever read or hear of "Ben Hur," a novel which has literally taken the American public by storm ? It is by an American soldier, General Wallace, who has great knowledge of the East and it is told of the time of Christ. I am reading it with a prejudice against it and the feeling that this sort of thing can't be well done in our days. Yet it seems to me very clever and fascinating. Perhaps I feel the same sort of doubt that I do about mystical stories. Never mind ! Work at your mystical story which you tell me you have begun. I hope to applaud its success.'

Mar. 3, '87. 'Adams' House Boston—We leave New York by the North German Lloyd steamer, *Aller*, of the 8th March—this day week. We shall be in London I hope in time for me to take my seat for Derry on Friday the 18th. Perhaps I may see you the next day—Saturday. I shall write to you again before I leave. I had a very full house in Boston for my farewell lecture but not such a crowd as we saw there when I made my first appearance and the faithful Whittredge escorted you to a box. I had a pleasant afternoon with Oliver Wendell Holmes. He took me about town to some charming old bookshops—one of which was on the way you and I had already traversed—and, coming on it no doubt with the instinct of genius, I saw several prettily bound copies of "Moloch" [1] there. Mrs. Field asked after you very cordially. Do you remember our calling there ? She shewed me a letter she wrote to me asking you and Campbell and me to dinner which was sent back to her through the post after many days. I had luncheon with her and met some interesting people. Boyle O'Reilly sends you

[1] A novel of mine.

all manner of regards. He is coming on with me to New York to-morrow. We are going by steamer. Then a few days in New York—partly on business, and then home! I am so glad to be going home! I have not made a fortune anywhere or out of anything, but I think I have done good to the Irish Cause with the American people. After all, I might have been a dead failure and I was not. Goodbye, I hope to follow soon on the track of this.'

CHAPTER V

'THE YEARNING EIGHTIES'

Mr. McCarthy came back when the session had begun, and plunged again into his 'world of men.' Keen as was the political interest, however, it was now less rancorous, and people thought of other things than the division of parliamentary parties. The excitement of Mr. Gladstone's great political upheaval had to a certain extent died down, and social matters were running more on their ordinary lines, in so far at least as they concerned the dwellers in that charming region which touches all other regions of London, yet is divided from all, and which my literary colleague used to call 'Upper Bohemia.'

I suppose every decade has its own peculiar social atmosphere. Certainly the social atmosphere of London in the later eighties and early nineties was very different from that of London of to-day. For one thing, people didn't rush over the country at such tremendous speed. Motors had yet to revolutionise life. The horseless locomotion craze, as regards fashionable London, had not got beyond bicycling in Battersea Park, to which remote locality the gay world, during a season or two, emigrated at certain hours of the day for exercise. Perhaps, too, rather less incense was burned before the gold-gods. There did not appear to be so many millionaires, or one heard less about them. Art—with a

large capital—was the greatest thing and vaunted its importance in turns of speech that had a decadent ring. Paradoxical epigram was the vogue, and the 'end of the century,' a phrase that explained everything, excused everything. I read the other day in a recent novel some contemptuous allusion to 'the yearning eighties.' Well, in 1887 the Fantastics had it their own way. Properly speaking, the æsthetic sunflower had flourished ten years previously, but from its stem other blossoms, more exotic in quality, had put forth. It was the mode to be subtle, introspective, analytical. 'The Yellow Book' was in the making.

Great passions postured like professional beauties, and 'Tragedy in trousers'—a clever phrase in which Sir Squire Bancroft, talking on one occasion to Justin McCarthy, summed up the modern drama—might have been applied with equal aptitude to the emotional and intellectual life of a certain section of London society.

This was a time of mental unrest if of less pronounced physical activity. Science was groping towards the electric theory of matter, though it had not stretched forth hands to orthodox religion. But miracles and mysteries abounded. Esoteric Buddhism and Madame Blavatsky had made their appearance in London. Mr. and Mrs. Sinnett's receptions at Ladbroke Gardens attracted a number of smart people who journeyed to the wilderness beyond Bayswater in the hope of finding occult phenomena, and went back disappointed.

I think that society, taking it all round, was more intellectual in the eighties. The breakfast parties of Mr. Gladstone and the late Lord Houghton were a kind of survival from the old Holland House literary entertainments, and to be invited to these was looked upon by young authors as a recognition of merit. Lord Houghton was, in especial, kind to literary beginners, and I have a happy remembrance of

coming into close quarters at his table with stars of the literary firmament. The earlier salon had a parallel, too, in the luncheon parties of various well-known hostesses, chief among these, Lady Dorothy Nevill, who to the dwellers in Upper Bohemia was a picturesque and gracious link with the world of Belgravia and Mayfair. In her own delightful reminiscences, Lady Dorothy has shown how the different circles of aristocracy, art, politics, and literature intersected in her charming house. So also in the drawing-rooms of Lady Jeune, now Lady St. Helier, where might be seen everyone with the claim of recognised individuality whether as politician, wit, actor, author, or backwoods explorer.

Talking of backwoodsmen and in connection with Justin McCarthy, I am reminded of a great London party at which, in compliment to the presence of a certain royal lady, there was a fine display of diamonds, ribbons, and orders. There, while threading a difficult way through the outer throng, I was startled by an unmistakable, long-back familiar hail of the Bush, coupled with an almost forgotten child-name. Instantaneously, after its queer fashion, the memory-biograph flashed a picture of the past—a gum-tree paddock, sloping to the river-bank on which grew lantarna shrubs and prickly pear bushes, and a boating party of young Australians scampering home through the gums. The visionary scene now gave place to a very real apparition, as, head and shoulders above the bedecked crowd, arose an enormous, broad-shouldered, fair-headed, bronzed son of the Bush. A splendid fellow he was, with the great loose build of a man who has sat the saddle from babyhood, cracked a stockwhip, and wielded a digger's pick, but who would have looked handsomer and more at home in stockman's 'jumper,' corduroys, and cabbage-tree hat, than in the conventional evening suit. How he had strayed into such a scene was a mystery. Wild Australians were not

plentiful in London in those days. He explained ingenuously that he had got ' off his track,' and intimated a desire to be ' yarded ' and put through his paces and started along the fresh trail by an old friend. . . . And the old friend wished nothing better. So we retired to a side nook and talked of things Australian and, likewise, of English political life. For the young man was an adventurous dreamer, with Irish blood in his veins and a longing to fight for Home Rule. There seemed no possibility then of the fulfilment of his ambition, but, oddly enough, its realisation was brought about not so long afterwards by the accident of a telegram handed to Mr. Justin McCarthy one evening when he, with a few other people—among them the Irish-Australian—was dining at our house. The telegram demanded that a Home Rule candidate should be found immediately to contest an Irish borough just thrown vacant. Everything depended upon promptitude. Here was the opportunity for our aspiring, young patriot. A word, and the thing was done.

I had already introduced the young man to Mr. McCarthy who had talked with him about his cherished ambition. Now the two had a hurried conference in another room. The candidate left our house at once and started that very night. He was on the spot before anybody expected and before his opponent had arrived. He won the election and sat in St. Stephen's during the latter years of Mr. Gladstone's fight for Irish independence. This, as will be seen, is anticipating. When F. O'D.—— (my backwoods friend) took his seat, Mr. McCarthy was leader of the Irish Party.

Now in this year of 1887, his letters speak for themselves :

' It is some time since you have seen any of the products of this aged typewriter and this is the first thing I have printed on it since my return to England. I am going off in half an hour to Leicester and I seize the moment to send you these few lines of greeting.' Monday, Mar. 21, '87.

Upstairs Lobby, Thursday, Mar. 24 '87.

'Gladstone has made a very powerful speech, as thoroughly Irish as Parnell himself could desire. . . . As I write this, Chamberlain is speaking—cleverly but very artificially. The apostate Radical trying to justify his apostasy. . . .

'Sir Lyon Playfair tells me he is delighted with "The Right Honourable." He says he tried to make out which wrote this part and which that, but he failed. He says his favourite character is the sweet Australian girl.—And she is my favourite too.'

Upstairs Lobby, Monday night.

'I have read all the copy that I have of "The Ladies' Gallery" and read it carefully so that I am prepared to talk over with you its construction when I see you next—to-morrow evening I hope. I much enjoyed our talk yesterday . . . it was like old times—when we were scheming out "The Right Honourable." . . .'

Again the Tories had brought in a Coercion measure. Mr. McCarthy writes about this time:

'Well, I never was crushed by defeat up to this time and I don't feel one little bit like being crushed now. . . . As Thackeray says "life is not all jocular." The best part of my life comes from you. I should feel dreary sometimes but for that best part—your companionship, your sympathy. . . .'

March '87.

'This is a scrambling letter written while John Dillon is making an impassioned speech against coercion. I can hear his words as I write.

'I was at Lady Dorothy's luncheon to-day. The most interesting person there to me was young Curzon—the young hope of the Tories, really a very clever and almost brilliant young fellow who has already made a mark in the House of Commons. Others present were Charles Wyndham and Lord Poltimore. It was very pleasant. I always like the Nevills themselves. . . . Thence I went to the House. . . .'

Upstairs Lobby.

'This is being finished here in the old place. We are threatened with an all-night sitting and all sorts of things. I don't think it will come to much but the relations on both sides are getting strained and I suppose we shall have some scenes. You will know almost as soon as I shall. The Tories talk of making a very stiff fight, and if they do, so shall we. I long to tell you all about the struggle: it is now much

past midnight and the battle, if it is serious and is to come off, must begin soon.'

The next day Mr. McCarthy dictated to me, for this book, these notes of a scene in the House of Commons, which had taken place in the early hours of that morning.

'The great scene began when T. P. O'Connor moved the adjournment of the debate. Gladstone rose to support the motion of the adjournment. He was received with tremendous cheering from the Radicals and Nationalists, and with something like a howl of anger from the Ministerialists. He spoke with a great deal of emotion in his voice, though the voice itself was rather worn and husky, and he threw a sudden dramatic force and energy into both voice and manner, when he said, that never in his experience had the case of a government asking for coercion been so completely torn into rags as the case of that Government had been to-night by Parnell's speech. When the division was going to be taken, Gladstone was the first man to rise on the Opposition bench and make for the division lobby, and at the sight of him getting up and making for the Lobby, the Nationalists and Radicals broke into cheers. It was a scene of the wildest confusion. We all sprang up to our feet. Men jumped on the seats and waved their hats. Even Parnell, usually so composed, waved his hat. There were wild cheers for Gladstone. The G.O.M. bowed his head once in a sort of acknowledgment of the enthusiasm. Then the division was taken on the motion of the adjournment and we lost it. Then we were going to make the motion that "the House do now adjourn." Smith intervened with the closure motion that "the question be now put." There was a moment of suspense because it was still in the Speaker's power to veto that motion and we had a faint idea that he might do so. But he accepted Smith's suggestion. There was a shout of indignation, furious on one side, delight and triumph on the other. Someone cried out, "Down with the Speaker!" We divided on that and of course were defeated, and then came the great scene. Now came the time for the question that "leave be given to bring in this Bill." There was a moment's doubt as to what

would happen next—as to whether we should divide or not. Suddenly Gladstone rose to his feet, and, saying a word or two to Morley and Harcourt who were there, walked deliberately down the floor of the House. They did not seem at first quite to understand him, then rose and got up too. We saw that he had made up his mind to take no further part in the night's work, to mark his sense of disapproval of the whole affair by leaving the whole responsibility on the heads of the Tories. All the Radicals and all the Nationalists jumped to their feet. There were cries of "Follow Gladstone!" "All leave the House together," and the whole Radical party and the whole Nationalist party trooped out after Gladstone—struggling to make their way out through a great wave and rush of members coming in to give their votes, amid wild cheering and counter cheering and even yelling of fury on both sides; and at last we all got out into the centre lobby and from that scattered all over the House and left the Tories to do their work themselves. . . . '

Now to the letters, which show how at this time the indictment of the Irish Party by *The Times*—which ended so disastrously for that newspaper—was having its effect upon London social life.

April '87. 'My dinner-party last night was as I expected it would be. I took down Mrs. C——. She asked me several questions about our partnership and how we worked: and didn't it need an extraordinary amount of sympathy to enable a man and a woman to get on together in such work, and didn't we ever quarrel—you know all the rest? And, talking of quarrelling, we very nearly did quarrel, Mrs. C. and I—over Irish politics. . . . And I told her it was no use talking like that to me because I never quarrelled with ladies at dinner-parties and never lost my temper. And then she frankly owned that she had lost hers and said she never ought to speak of politics except to those who entirely agreed with her; we became good friends again—a process easily accomplished with me inasmuch as I didn't care three straws about her opinion of Parnell or anyone else or anything else in the world. I got home early which was one good thing. I wonder why one does go out to ordinary dinner-parties! I suppose living in London one

must take London as it is and go about and see people. It is plain to me that the attacks in *The Times* will render social life rather a terrifying thing to me just now. The sort of people one meets always read *The Times* and take its abominations for gospel. Personally, I don't care much what is said or thought. The people I do care about do not believe in *The Times*, and it is cheap heroism for me to say that I don't much care what others may think. I passed on the whole, a contented sort of day—this Sunday. I am trying to school myself into the mood of mind which is thankful for all the kindness Heaven shows one and does not expect to have everything one's own way. I look forward to seeing you to-morrow. . . . Good-night.'

April 10, Dublin.

'Just a line to say that our English meeting was a very great success. A vast circus was literally crammed in every part and the enthusiasm was immense and tremendous. John Bright's son, who is a vigorous Home Ruler, made a vigorous speech. I spoke for an hour. Then went on to Crewe, caught the Holyhead train and got here this morning. We leave for Derry this evening and shall get there about four to-morrow morning. Write to me at Roddy's Hotel, Derry. I don't expect to be there more than a very few days. I must get back to the House.

Londonderry, April 12, '87.

'Your letter was very interesting with its account of your Tory dinner party. As a kind of set-off I send you a report telegraphed to our Dublin papers of our meeting here yesterday. Don't trouble to read it; the report is very poor; but just glance at the opening part to see what the thing was like. It was really a splendid sight, such a concourse of enthusiastic people and such picturesque hollows and hills, and on so lovely a day—under such a sky. To-day I have been receiving addresses and driving about and seeing people. To-morrow I shall do the same thing. To-morrow night we have a meeting. Next day I shall leave for Dublin and I hope to be in London on Friday. I mean to call at Talbot Square about three on Friday unless I find a letter from you at Cheyne Gardens to tell me that hour will not suit you. Yes, I will do all I can to get a little rest from the work of the House. . . . We shall have a long and close struggle when the Coercion Bill gets into Committee, but before and after that, I shall take all the rest I can. You know what one feels about a political cause he is

engaged in; it is like a battle. You understand all that. But the cause is going well and I am not vain and silly enough to think that it requires all my personal attention.'

Londonderry, April 13, '87.

'I have just got your letter, having just come in after paying a round of electioneering calls and receiving a number of addresses, and I want this to go off by the mail. I agree entirely in the spirit of all your suggestions. I am for keeping to the keynote—going in boldly for the melodramatic and sacrificing all useless dialogue for that purpose. Throw away without scruple every page of copy which you think unnecessary. . . . Deal with what I have written exactly as if you had written it. . . . I hope to follow quickly on the heels of this letter.'

On April 18 in this year, there was published in *The Times* the celebrated forged letter, sold to that newspaper by Pigott, which ostensibly implicated Mr. Parnell in the Phœnix Park murders and was the culmination of that long and bitter series of articles called 'Parnellism and Crime.' Mr. McCarthy writes referring to it on the same date:

April 18, Upstairs Lobby.

'The talk of the House this evening has been chiefly about the astounding forgery by which *The Times* has allowed itself to be taken in—the pretended letter from Parnell. Fancy what political controversy has sunk to! The letter is a mere gross vulgar forgery. Parnell will speak later in the evening and will denounce it. It did not after all find much credence in the House even among our enemies—at all events among our intelligent enemies—and it will only hurt and disgrace *The Times* in the end.

'Gladstone is now speaking and is in fine voice. I can hear his speech where I am writing this, and if I want to hear better, I make an occasional dive into the gallery and then come back here again. So that I am between you and Gladstone. . . . I wish you were in the House this evening to hear this debate and stay to the end and see the Division. But every place was taken by ballot a week ago while I was in Ireland. One has a curious sense just now of being a watcher at the beginning of a political revolution. . . .

'Truth to say, the excitement of present political conditions rather unsettles the mind. I do not however generally allow my mind to get unsettled in that way. And I rather like disciplining my mind when I can and making it bend to its different kinds of work. And I want our book to go on. You may depend upon it that I shall attend to all your injunctions. Yes, I was very happy in your company—happy as a man could be. Where otherwise could one get such comradeship? I thank Providence for giving me such support and I feel that long years from this when you look back on this time it will be a gratification for you to know and to remember that you did so much good and were so much of comfort to one sometimes sorely tried by political and other perplexities. . . .'

Mr. McCarthy gave me on April 21 some account of the effect produced in the House of Commons by the episode of the forged letter, and I typed at his dictation as follows:

'On April 18th—the day on which the forged letter of Parnell's appeared in *The Times*—the debate on Coercion was to be resumed, and Sexton, who had moved the adjournment, was to open the debate. The questions that day were almost unprecedentedly short. I went and took my seat on the high bench below the gangway, next to Sexton and John Dillon. Parnell had not come and we were in great anxiety. We knew of course that the letter must be a forgery. On that point there was not the slightest doubt in our minds. But the time was running out; Sexton would soon have to speak. The effect would be most damaging if he were not able to denounce the forgery in his speech; and yet we all felt that until Parnell came to the House or communicated with us in some way, it would be impossible to do anything of the kind. We agreed hastily among ourselves that Sexton should say nothing on the subject unless he had authority. The questions ended. Sexton had to begin his speech. Parnell was not there. When Sexton had been some ten minutes speaking, Parnell came in and took his seat next to me. He seemed surprised to find Sexton speaking, and said he thought the questions would have lasted much longer. I asked him—we were whispering this in very low tones—what he was going to do about the forgery in *The Times*.

I said : " Of course it is a forgery ? " He looked at me in a kind of wondering way and said : " Well, I shouldn't think you had much doubt in your mind about that ? "

' I said : " Oh, no, none whatever," and then asked him what he meant to do.

' He said he had come down to the House intending to denounce the forgery immediately after question time. I said : " You can denounce it in your speech later on." He said : " Yes, but I should like to have done it at once—to let it go to the world at once."

' Just at that moment Sexton in his speech was denouncing the attacks made on the Nationalist Party and the calumnies got up against them. I said aloud : " And forgeries." Sexton looked around and saw that Parnell was sitting with me.

' " And forgeries," I said once more.

' Sexton understood at a glance. He saw that Parnell had authorised the denunciation of the letter as a forgery, and that gave him all he wanted. He streamed away in an eloquent and indignant denunciation of *The Times*' letter as a malignant forgery.

' As I was coming out of the division lobby after the division I passed by the front Opposition bench. Gladstone was sitting there. He spoke to me and held out his hand. I had not had a chance of speaking to him since my return from America. He asked me to sit down beside him and I did so. I told him of the number of American and Canadian audiences I had addressed who had passed resolutions of sympathy with him in his policy of Home Rule, and of the immense number of messages to that effect that I was charged to bring him.

' He said : " And in Canada as well as the States ? "

' I told him " Yes," and how almost universal in Canada was the feeling in favour of Home Rule. We talked a little about this ; and then I asked him what he thought of Parnell's speech.[1]

' He said he thought it very clear : and, towards the close, very eloquent.

' I asked him what he thought the effect of the denial would be upon the House.

[1] Mr. Parnell spoke, denying the charge as an audacious fabrication—later in the evening—just before the division on the second reading of the Coercion Bill.

'He said: "I hope there is not in the House anyone stupid enough or base enough to doubt the truth of Parnell's denial."'

'The House was very dull; a heavy stolid calm after the storm of last night. I only hope some sudden storm may not break out later on, as generally comes to pass when I give myself a night away from the scene. People were still talking much about *The Times* and its forgery; and I was inundated by all sorts of contradictory opinions as to what I ought to urge Parnell to do. My own impression is that he ought to do no more—that having given his full and manly denunciation of the forgery he ought to rest there. Those who will not believe him now would not believe him though one rose from the dead. April '87.

'I have been very pressingly asked to attend and speak at a meeting at Rugby on the first of June in company with—of all persons in the world—Lord Spencer! I think I shall accept the invitation. I promised to go to a Rugby meeting just before the last elections, but was compelled to break away from my engagements at the last moment because of the necessity of rushing off to Derry. I feel therefore bound to go this time and I think it would be effective to go in the company of Lord Spencer.'

Talking still about *The Times*' attack and the forged letter—which it was alleged had been written by Mr. Parnell nine days after the Phœnix Park murders in 1882, and implied his sympathy with the murders—Mr. McCarthy dictated to me for future use the following notes as to how he and his colleagues had at the time received the news of the Phœnix Park tragedy.

I think the notes, as well as some others he gave me referring to Fenians of that period, may be of interest here.

'It was on a Sunday morning,' he said, 'that I first read in the *Observer* the news of the murders in Phœnix Park. The night before that, I had been to the Westminster Palace Hotel to see Davitt who had just come out of prison. Things were going wonderfully well with us then. Davitt had been released from prison through Chamberlain, on whom we had brought our influence to bear, and his release was understood

to be one of the conditions of agreement between the Government and the Irish party. In fact when we first made the stipulation to Chamberlain about Davitt—Sexton, Healy and myself—he interrupted us by saying "Of course, I had thought of that. I have already written to Sir William Harcourt (then Home Secretary) to say that Davitt's release is indispensable."

'Davitt was released, and I went with some others to the Westminster Palace Hotel to meet him. Several were there; —I think John Dillon, but not Parnell. Everything seemed full of hope, Davitt was as fully convinced as I was that the Liberal Government and we were about to work together in the cause of Ireland. I went home perfectly hopeful and happy.

'Next morning I was up early—a rare thing for me—up before any of my family—I was then living in Jermyn Street. I read the *Observer*—the theatre notices chiefly and did not, till later, turn to the leader page. Then I saw the horrible announcement of the murders.

'Very soon, men began to pour into my rooms—Irish members mostly. Everyone expressed the same feeling of horror. I thought the best thing was to go at once and see Parnell, who then always had rooms—whether he occupied them or not—at the Westminster Palace Hotel. . . . We found Parnell there and Davitt and John Dillon and Healy, and we found them engaged in drawing up an address to the Irish people denouncing the crime and saying that Ireland never could be right till she had succeeded in bringing the criminals to justice.

'The most utter depression prevailed in our little meeting. The hopes of the Irish cause seemed to be literally blasted. Healy, whom people think so truculent, felt it so much that he deliberately proposed we should all resign our seats and go back into obscurity, believing the cause hopeless for our generation, on which the shadow of that crime had fallen. I think Parnell leaned towards this counsel. I was, I believe, the first to oppose it. I contended that nothing which happened from the outside would release us from the duty we owed to our constituents and the Irish people, and that we were bound to stand to our posts. Some others were of the same opinion. In the end, we all came round to it.

'Then the address was drawn up and signed by Parnell,

Davitt and Dillon representing the Irish National Land League. I was not a member of the Executive of that League, and at that time the English Land League had not come to its existence. Then Parnell and I talked together, and we thought the best thing was for us—we two—to go and consult some of our English friends. We started out and went first to see Sir Charles Dilke. Our impression was that either Dilke or Chamberlain would be asked to take the post of Irish Secretary. Indeed the general impression was that either one man or the other would have been asked at the time when Lord Frederick Cavendish was appointed. . . . We saw Dilke. He was perfectly composed and cool. He said that if Gladstone offered him the post of Irish Secretary, nothing that had happened lately would in the least deter him from accepting it. He went on to say that he was a Home Ruler *quand même*: that he would be inclined to press Home Rule on the Irish people, even if they were not wholly inclined for it, because he so fully believed in the principle, whereas Chamberlain would only give Home Rule if the Irish people refused to accept anything less. But, on the other hand, Chamberlain was an optimist in the matter and thought he could do a great good as Irish Secretary; and he—Dilke—was not so certain, seeing the difficulty of dealing with the Castle and the permanent officials, and therefore they agreed that as far as they were concerned, it was better Chamberlain should go.

'He said "If Chamberlain goes, he'll go to smash things" —meaning the Dublin Castle system.

'When we were leaving, Dilke drew me aside and spoke of the extreme unwisdom of allowing Parnell to walk about the streets that day in London. He said no one could tell when someone might recognise him and, thinking he was responsible for the murders, make an attack on him.

'Then we went to Chamberlain and had a long talk with him. We found him perfectly willing to go to Ireland, but he said he must have his own way there, and he would either make or mar—by which we understood the Castle system. I remember with peculiar interest how he scouted the notion of any intelligent Englishman believing for an instant that Parnell had any sympathy with assassination and outrage. I remember Parnell saying to him that he did not believe the

murder-gang in Ireland could muster more than twenty men, all told. Captain O'Shea came in while we were talking. When we were leaving, Chamberlain gave us much the same kind of caution that Dilke had given. I suggested to Parnell that we should take a hansom, and I hinted the reason to him. He said rather sharply that he would do nothing of the kind. He said that he had done no wrong to anyone, and that he intended to walk in the open streets like anyone else. Some man from the top of an omnibus passing us called out—"There's Parnell!" whether in friendship or animosity I don't know—but otherwise we were unnoticed.

'I went back to Jermyn Street and found friends and interviewers of all kinds awaiting me—among others Henry George and Coleridge Kennard—lately member for Salisbury I think.'

The further notes Mr. McCarthy dictated to me about that time concerned a dramatic episode, not I fancy generally known, which shows the difficulties the Irish Party had to contend with in relation to Fenianism.

'Again, early one Sunday morning,' he said, 'while I was still in bed, I was told that an Irish member of Parliament wanted to see me on most urgent business. This member had in his younger days been Fenian and a great comrade of Michael Davitt. Of late years his political views had considerably sobered, but he was much esteemed and trusted by the better men of the Fenian party. He often helped the poorer members of that party to employment, he himself being at the head of a large business.

'He was, however, particularly detested by the dynamite and assassin gang, and had often been warned that his life would be taken some day because of the open and fearless way in which he denounced them and their doings.

'This morning, when he came to see me, was immediately after the arrest of James Carey in Dublin. I went down to him as soon as I could and he told me that he had received certain information, through a Fenian on whom he could rely that a well-known desperado—one Captain —— had come over to Europe with the determination to assassinate Gladstone who was then in Cannes. He told me that this —— was

a man of most desperate character, who had threatened him —my visitor—that he would kill him.

'He told me that this man was certainly in Cannes and that Frank Byrne was in Cannes also and some third man of the same views whose name was not known to me. I was not given the name of his informant, who I understand had got at the secret by professing to favour the general designs of the other men and had then at once communicated with my friend, so that steps might be taken to frustrate them. A little while before, I should not have believed that Frank Byrne could be implicated in such an affair. But the fact that he had never written to me authorising me to contradict the charges made against him forced me to the belief that he must have been implicated in the Phœnix Park murders: and I felt that if he were capable of that he would be capable of anything. The only thing now was, what were we to do? Obviously, we must put someone in communication with the authorities at Cannes at once. My friend now pointed out to me—as he seemed to think it was his duty to do—the extreme danger of the course we were about to take. If it were known by the assassin party that we had interfered to baffle their plot and to save their intended victim we should in all probability be murdered. I said that did not give me a moment's consideration, and then he said, which I knew well, that it did not count for anything with him, but that he thought it right to tell me of the danger. The other danger was, that if we had to tell our story to some thick-witted or malignant official we might expose ourselves to the odious suspicion of being concerned in some sort of abominable secret schemes which had brought us into companionship with assassins and enabled us to get at their secrets. That danger we both thought very serious, but of course it did not weigh with us a great deal in deciding on our course.

'We first drove to the house of Sir C. Dilke. He was out of town. We then drove to the house of J. Chamberlain who was also out of town. The time was flying by: my friend's information led him to believe that the murder would be done some time after church when the crowds had dispersed. We then thought it best to go to Herbert Gladstone though we were naturally unwilling to alarm the

Gladstone family if it could be avoided. We drove to the official residence in Downing Street and saw Herbert Gladstone. . . . We told him our story. He listened to it with great courage and *sang froid* and composure showing no more agitation than if we were telling him of some arrangement for the holding of a public meeting. We were both greatly struck by his coolness and felt sure that we had come upon the right man. We strongly urged on him that, unless it proved to be absolutely necessary, nothing should be said to Mr. Gladstone himself. We did not suggest to him the steps he ought to take. We left that entirely in his hands. That evening—I think it was—I had a message from him to say that everything had been cared for, and the following day in the tea-room of the House of Commons that he had reason to believe the man had left Cannes. I said that I hoped nothing would ever be told to Mr. Gladstone himself about it and he seemed to assent to this, but we spoke only a very few words and from that time to this we have never exchanged a syllable on the subject.

'I shall never forget my feeling of agony when on knocking at the door in Ebury Street I saw Major Geary—a jolly, good-natured gunner whom we had met in the East and who, as he very seldom came to London, would be sure to stay both for luncheon and for dinner and till late into the night. And I thought to myself "I shall have to talk to him and laugh and make jokes all the day and have this horrible thing on my mind and when I hear the news boys shouting special editions of the *Observer* late in the evening, shall thrill with terror at the possibility of learning from their cries that our effort to save Mr. Gladstone had failed!"'

Turning anew to the letters:

Upstairs Lobby, Friday night.

'. . . So far this has been a day of small things here—except for a little opening passage of arms between Lord Hartington and John Dillon.

'I did some of your work—a fair amount too. I don't know how you will like it. I have an interviewer from a Paris paper coming to see me at noon—the *Débats*. Then I go to my doctor and then home to work—despite all the gloomy warnings of my friendly physician about my condition of health. Yet everyone I meet in the House keeps telling

me how well I am looking and of course I always say that I am robust and radiant in the highest degree. I think you and I and Doctor Roose are the only people who have any suspicion the other way, for I haven't said much at home. In good truth, I feel sure I shall come out all right and meantime I make you the confidante of my gloomier moods—a curious and doubtful privilege of friendship to confer on anyone. It is, seriously, a priceless advantage to me to have a colleague and companion with whom I can be just my real self. . . . I am fortunate beyond my deserts, but at least I have grace and gratefulness enough to appreciate my good fortune and to know what your companionship and sympathy are worth. If ever I feel disposed to grumble at things, I can always bring myself into better mood by remembering what I have to thank the benign fates for giving me.'

'The House thus far is dull to-night. We had a very interesting scene however from an English member, Ellis, who has been studying the Irish question in Ireland and spoke manfully for the National League. I have not seen Parnell—I don't think he has come back. April '87.

'"Thou shalt praise me to-day, oh Caesar!" but more I fear for the quantity than the quality of my work—twelve pages of copy. . . . I am afraid it is dreadfully melodramatic. . . . However, you will touch it up and put some realism into it. I have made it a mere skeleton—not nearly finished.

'I was deeply interested in our work and our talk last evening and was much impressed by the passages we read together. They make out a clear and consistent character. . . I always think that one of the most piercingly pathetic sayings in Skakespeare—still Shakespeare you see—is the saying of Othello about throwing away a pearl richer than all his tribe. . . .'

'. . . Lord John Manners has just got up. He was what might be called a pretty speaker, some thirty years ago. But I don't particularly want to hear him now. Parnell has not come. He is in his Wicklow home Avondale, very unwell. A curious illustration of the change in the times was given me this evening in the shape of an invitation to dinner from Gladstone for Saturday week. Of course I shall go. I have been interrupted several times while writing this and it is now midnight. John Morley is up. . . .' Upstairs Lobby, April '87.

April '87. '. . . Professor Stuart came to me and began asking me if I had seen Parnell and if Parnell were coming to the House. I told him I had not heard from Parnell and that I did not think he was coming to the House, but that I thought he would come to-morrow. He said that he had been talking to Gladstone and that G. was very anxious as to the course Parnell ought to take with regard to *The Times*. His impression was that Gladstone thought Parnell ought to ask for a committee of the House and that he could found his motion on the fact that, since his denial of the letter in *The Times*, two members of the Government had said more or less explicitly that they did not believe in the denial. Stuart said for himself that he hoped Parnell would not under any conceivable circumstances allow himself to be persuaded to go into a court of law. For one reason, he said, the proceedings would be of enormous length. Walter of *The Times* had said that if Parnell gave them the chance, they would go into the whole history of the movement and that they would have commissions to take evidence in America, Australia, etc., and meanwhile, all the evil effect of the forgery would be going on. Stuart said that it was perfectly impossible that a man in Parnell's position could avoid during these past years being brought into communication with men who afterwards showed themselves criminals of one kind or another, and a certain class of persons in England would insist on inferring that he must have known beforehand what sort of persons they were.

'Then, he said, a criminal prosecution of *The Times* would allow an immense latitude in cross-examination and every fact in a man's life might be gone into. I advised Stuart to go to Parnell himself and tell him all this, and he said he would.'

April '87. 'Yesterday he came to see me again in the House and told me he wanted to alter something in the impression he had conveyed to me the day before. He said that he had been talking to Gladstone more explicitly about the affair. And that Gladstone said time was a great element in any step to be taken—meaning that if anything were to be done, it ought to be done quickly, but that Gladstone distinctly refused to give any advice himself as to whether anything ought to be done or nothing. Stuart asked him if his refusal arose from the fact that he could not make up his own mind to a

decision, or that he merely shrank from the responsibility of giving advice. Gladstone said that it arose from the two things—or that one was the consequence of the other. He said that he had been thinking it out and he honestly could not make up his mind as to whether it would be better for Parnell to do something or nothing, and that therefore he shrank naturally from saying anything. Stuart told me he would come and see me again in the course of the evening and give me any opinion he could gather among the Liberals who were best qualified to judge. He did see me several times in the course of the evening in the House, and the sum of the information I gathered to be this : John Morley thought some step ought to be taken by Parnell but refused to take the responsibility of advising what it should be. Lord Herschell—the late Lord Chancellor—thought that no further notice ought to be taken by Parnell of the matter. Arnold Morley, the Liberal Whip, who ought to have good opportunities of knowing the feeling of the country, was at first in favour of Parnell moving for a committee, but was now entirely against it. He said that the effect of the forgery on the feeling of the country was decidedly good for the Liberal Cause. He said that nothing aroused such enthusiasm in a great Liberal meeting as a denunciation of the forgery and the vindication of Parnell. He instanced—I think it was he—the tremendous reception given at the great Manchester meeting to John Dillon—that the hall was crammed—it held more than 10,000 people—and that the excitement became actually overwhelming in its enthusiasm when Dillon vindicated Parnell and denounced *The Times*. Anyhow Morley thought Parnell had better do nothing. Of course all these men were naturally considering the interests of the Liberal Party in the effect which this course or that would have on the feeling of the country.'

'. . . The parliamentary sensation this evening so far, has been the presence of Buffalo Bill in our dining-room. He was entertained by Lord Charles Beresford. Apart from that interesting event, we have had a very powerful speech from Gladstone in support of one of our amendments to the first clause in the Coercion bill which is now in Committee. Then Gladstone sent to us and asked us to take that division early as he had to go away, and he was anxious to record

Upstairs Lobby, April, '87.

his vote with us. Of course we assented and we made a good division, leaving the Government with only a majority of 37. It is not a question of great importance, but we regard ourselves as having made a score and we were correspondingly elated.'

Upstairs Lobby, May 3. '. . . We have had a stormy evening here. I came down at half-past five and found a tumult going on. It was the old question of *The Times*: the calumnies raised by a Tory member (my defeated opponent), and John Dillon was passionately demanding a committee of enquiry into the truth of the charges. I rejoiced that I had not come too late. We had a long and heated debate. Gladstone made a powerful speech in our favour. So did Harcourt and Whitbread—the latter especially good—and the whole question was finally adjourned till to-morrow to give the Government time to consider what they will do. I am told that they will refuse to grant us the Committee of Enquiry, but the very refusal will end in our favour. I spoke in the debate, as of course I was bound to do, but I felt too deeply to be able to tell whether I spoke well or ill. I fear Parnell is too unwell to be able to come over before the end of the week. . . . In the storm and stress of the debate, I kept wishing you were here. I should have rushed off and talked the thing over with you.'

May 4, '87. 'It is as I expected. The Government will not give us a committee. They say we can prosecute. We ask for a committee composed, if they like, of Tory members exclusively, and they refer us to the Old Bailey! We ask a tribunal of honour—a committee of Englishmen, and they tell us the law-courts are open, where a case might be dragged on for a year, and some bigoted, stupid, Primrose-League tradesman on the jury could defeat the ends of justice! Well, at least, they can't say any more that we did not court enquiry. That much at least we have gained. The debate is still going on, and will, I presume, go on to-morrow.'

The extract below, from an undated letter, presumably of this time, refers to an instance of Justin McCarthy's disinterested loyalty to his friends. The occasion was that of the removal of Mr. Frank Hill, that brilliant man of letters, from the editorship of the *Daily News*, of which journal Mr.

Henry Labouchere was chief proprietor—and the appointment of Mr.—now Sir Henry—Lucy in his place. Mr. McCarthy was, at that time, holding a lucrative and important post on the paper as political leader-writer, but on Mr. Hill's dismissal, in what he felt to be an unjust manner, he instantly threw up his appointment and did not write again for the *Daily News* until some year or two later, when he was urged by Hill to resume his old work at the request of, I think, Mr.—later Sir John—Robinson, the then manager.

It was, I know, an appreciable financial loss to Mr. McCarthy, and he liked his work and his colleagues. But—that was the man!

The *Daily News* had at that period a galaxy of literary talent upon its staff. Besides the outgoing and incoming editors, Mr. Hill and Mr. Lucy, and Justin McCarthy himself, there were Mr. Andrew Lang—the news of whose loss to the world comes as I now write; Mr. Herbert Paul, distinguished essayist and historian—an old Northamptonshire friend of my own, and indeed, one of the guests at that memorable little dinner at the Frederick Sartoris' where I first met Justin McCarthy; Mr. Richard Whiteing, author of 'Number Five John Street;' and other equal or lesser lights of literature in the eighties. Mr. McCarthy writes to me late one evening:

'I talked to Hill and Mrs. Hill to-night. The news of a plot against him by some of the members of the late Government came as a surprise to Mrs. Hill, but I am sure it is true and it is right that she should know it, and he through her. . . . But it was a very large dinner-party, and I had not much chance of private talk.'

'I am much taken with your idea about the bright little American novel. I feel sure we could make it very attractive and it would be a pity to let so much curious experience go for nothing. . . . It would give a pleasant variety to our

May '87.

work. You had some fresh ideas to-day such as the illustration of the hereditary religious feeling in *Mary Beaton* which had not occurred to me. . . I am writing to Appleton, the lecture agent, asking him to come and see me on Tuesday. He announces himself as in co-partnership with an Australian agency, and I should like to talk to him on that subject, too, as a visit to Australia is always in my hopes and might be possible next year. If we could all go out—I mean you and Campbell and I! Anyhow I will talk to my lecture agent. I should so love to see Australia in company with you. And we might perhaps do an Australian book together. Are these dreams? No, not merely dreams I think. In any case, I like dreaming of such things. I dream of many things, waking as well as sleeping. Some of my dreams have turned into dear delightful realities, so why not others? . . . I hope to see you on Sunday if I don't get to the Grosvenor to-morrow. Goodnight, I wish you all good things.'

May '87. 'I received your letter this morning. It made me glad to know that you are enjoying yourself with your children and the flowers and the open air. I have a picture of you in my mind and it is pleasant to look at. How much I hope the visit will do you good. I want you to drink in all the good you can from the fresh pure country air—and how lucky you are to have soft warm air and fine weather. Here, we have only a succession of drenching showers. Get all the good you can—and don't mind the New Club and the Boughtons' party.

'I have not been able to do any of our work to-day and could not to-morrow because we have a meeting of the party before the House sits. . . . I am glad you liked the bits I sent you. And I am glad to hear that you are absorbed in Mary Stuart because I know you will get some new ideas for our *Mary*. . . .

'I am going to the Literary Fund dinner to-night. Lord Lytton is to be in the chair.'

Upstairs Lobby, May '87. 'Gladstone has just been making a very fine speech—fine even for him—in favour of our appeal for a committee of investigation. It was a piece of generous and sympathetic eloquence, and cannot but have a profound effect upon public opinion—on any fair opinion. Curiously enough, the *Standard* is independent and just enough to condemn the course taken

by the Government. I had to take the chair as a meeting of our party rather early, and then come on to a sitting of the House. These are stormy times, not favourable to the dear quiet ways of literature. . . . I should like to show you two letters I have received from absent members of our Irish party, in reply to a telegram from me, calling them to come to London at once and stay in the House. They but tell the same, sad simple story.

'"I will come at once if you insist," each says in substance, "but I am at a crisis in my financial affairs, have neglected my business for years in the interests of the Cause. If I leave now, I am ruined."

'These are the venal agitators who are living on politics! I can't help telling you about this for you will understand and sympathise. . . . I send these few little lines, uncertain whether they will reach you in the morning before you start for home. I am so glad you are coming back though I should have been willing to do without you for a longer time if it would be any good to you. I got your letter this morning. I enjoy your joy with the flowers. I could enter into it with perfect fulness. Couldn't we have a day in the country sometime like the charity-children?

'The House is getting up a Jubilee Committee, to be composed of leading members, to manage the part the House of Commons is to take in the Jubilee Ceremonies. I have been asked to accept a place on the committee and have declined. Don't you think I was right? I don't mean anything disrespectful, but I think this year, when Ireland's share in the Jubilee is a coercion bill, a prominent Irish member holding a sort of official position in the Irish party, would seem hardly in his right place on a Jubilee committee.'

Upstairs Lobby, May 11.

'The House of Commons was thrilled to-day by the tidings that at the Stock Exchange a telegram was posted announcing the death of Parnell. I was not thrilled because I had just heard that Stead of the *Pall Mall Gazette* had just received a telegram from Parnell saying that he is to be in London to-morrow. Stead wrote, as I am told, expressing a wish to be allowed to go over and see Parnell at his place Avondale: and Parnell sent him the telegram announcing his coming over. So I was able to satisfy a little host of newspaper men who swooped on me in the Lobby.'

Upstairs Lobby, May '87.

'I hope you enjoyed your visit to the House this evening and that you were not very tired after walking so much about the lobbies and the terrace. To you, I know the inner life of the House is never dull or uninteresting. You appreciate and understand its movements. And it is so different when one knows the House better than from the dim observatory of the Ladies' Gallery. . . . I am getting to associate you with the House. When are you coming to dine here again? That little dining-room is consecrated by some pleasant memories.'

May 17, '87.

'I have been just now in some talk with Gladstone about an invitation I brought him from one of the Boston magazines —I think I told you of it—to write an article of three small pages for £200—not dollars—or any larger sum he is pleased to ask. He was greatly interested by the liberality of the offer and promised to consider it. The thing that interested him was that an American publication of which he had never heard before could be in a position to make such an offer, and I think he will probably write the article. But he wants to see the magazine before he decides.'

'It was disappointing and tantalising not to be able to get to our literary work last night in any satisfactory manner. . . . I wonder how you have been getting on since and whether you really accomplished all your picture-galleries and your "Buffalo-Bill"—by the way I propose that the American Exhibition be called henceforth "The Billeries!" I think the idea is original and happy: and I have a hope of immortal fame as the author. . . .

'I have got back from the House. The Coercion bill is not on to-day and I did not stay late. . . .'

May 18, '87.

'I went down to the House after leaving you, and, late in the day, Parnell appeared in the lobby. "Appeared" is a fitting word to use, for no apparition—no ghost from the grave, ever looked more startling among living men. Only one impression was produced among all who saw him—the ghastly face, the wasted form, the glassy eyes gleaming, looking like the terrible corpse-candles of Welsh superstition. If ever death shone in a face it shone in that. I came on John Morley a moment after. We both could only say in one breath "Good God! have you seen Parnell?"'

May 24, '87.

'Too long, most assuredly, was the sitting of the House yesterday. I came away at three in the morning, but it did

not end till half-past five. To-day I have not gone near the House at all. I want to make something like what members of the Government, when they are talking of the Coercion Bill, call "substantial progress" with our work. I shall bring you all I have of every kind to-morrow, and we will define if we can the length of the third volume. To-night I am going to Dr. Roose's dinner and, later on, to Lady Dilke's party. Shall not send this off till I come back, so that if there be anything interesting to tell you, I can tell it. . . .

'Send to your library for a little book called "How to make a Saint." It is by the author of "The Life of a Prig," do you remember it?—a marvellous little piece of satire published a short time ago. "How to make a Saint" is a masterpiece of delicate satirical humour—all about the Ritualists and the Anglican Church and the passion for imitating Catholics. . . .'

Shakespeare Hotel, Stratford on Avon, May 29, '87.

'The air is chill and wintry, and the skies are grey, and any landscape, less tenderly beautiful than this of the country round Stratford, would look depressing. But despite east wind, chill air and occasional showers, the place does look beautiful and, positively, I feel better already although the weather is all that I don't like. Sir Richard Temple is staying in the hotel, and waylays me in the passages to talk politics. I wonder what you are doing? Is this the day of your luncheon at the Herman Merivales? Or are you at home, and have you callers, and who are they, and are they dull or not? I went to a little Catholic Church to-day, and I thought of the charming copy you could have made out of the quaint, modest little church with its small congregation and its tiny graveyard. . . .

'One cannot escape from the "local man" even in the town of Shakespeare. The "local man" turned up to-day in the person of the Chairman of the Association to ask me to speak at a meeting here in June in the interest of Lord William Compton the Gladstonian candidate. I gave him only a conditional promise. . . .

'We walk through pleasant meadows and parks and by the river. The weather is still the same; the skies one uniform grey—no gleam of sun as yet, and I feel my atmosphere grey somehow. I have not been reading much and have not written one line—except to you. You would love

these sweet English lanes and meadows and hedges. . . . Good bye. Be egotistical—very—when you write, although it is not your way, and tell me all about yourself.

'. . . I have got your letter, and I need not say that it was welcome. Your nine slips was a great piece of work but I hope it did not tire you. I should be glad if you could go down to Coombe for a few days and work there in quiet.'

Stratford on Avon, June 1, '87.

'Glad to hear that your dinner party went off well. I should much like to have seen your table covered with the lovely crab-apple blossoms. For the rest, I fancy the party was better without me. . . .

'We had a very fine day yesterday, for which one may give thanks. "The Past is always secure." We drove to Warwick, then to Kenilworth and Leamington where we had tea and chanced to meet Mr. Speaker Peel. . . . Drove home in the evening along lovely roads and under trees which made one feel young again. All the same, you are right, and I had rather, under certain conditions, be in London streets, than under other conditions in peerless Thessalian Tempe. . . .'

June 2, '87.

'I am much interested in all you tell me of your doings and the work, I don't think it will be too melodramatic. Oh yes, people do overhear in real life sometimes: the newspaper reports will bear us out in that. I am glad that you admire "Endymion." I admire it greatly; it is a splendid rise from the somewhat low level of "Lothair." We are having the Catholic priest to dine with us to-day. He is a very well educated and agreeable young man, although a Primrose Leaguer, as indeed too many of the English Catholics are. Who was your Liberal Unionist—the man who said he knew Parnell, and believed he had written that letter? I am curious to know.'

London, June 17, '87.

'I fear our Wild West dinner can't come off next Sunday. The Grand Duke Michael has intervened and carried off all our best people, but I will tell you to-morrow. I have just got back from the house. We had a troublous night with no end of negotiations and party meetings. . . . We succeeded in avoiding any strong scenes—no easy thing under all the conditions but we did it. Parnell came only for a few minutes, looking ghastly. I sent him away and took on myself the responsibility of keeping things quiet. . . . It has been a heavy day and I am tired.'

'My dinner party at Lord Ripon's was not very interesting —a few colourless peers and several members of our House. The one who interested me was Schnadhorst—the famous Birmingham wire-puller—the man who made Chamberlain and now hopes to unmake him. I had never seen him before though we had been in correspondence off and on about ten years. . . .'

'I went to the House after leaving you yesterday— dined there with T. P. O'Connor, the Laboucheres, Professor Stuart, the Pulitzers, and an American doctor and his wife. . . . To-morrow, Smith is to move that the report stage of the Bill[1] is to be finished by seven o'clock on Monday—that is to say, that if it be not finished by that time, the Speaker is to bring the debate to a sudden stop. We shall therefore have a trying evening on Monday and I don't know yet what we shall do. I shall try as far as I can to avoid anything melodramatic. I presume we shall have a meeting of our party to consider our policy, and of course we shall be guided to a great extent by Gladstone's wishes. . . . June 19, '87.

'Do not fail to think over what we talked of about my retirement: think it over from two points of view. First whether it is a course which I can honourably take under present conditions—whether I am not bound at any risk, the end being so comparatively near, to wait until the end and see the fight out. . . .

'*Punch* has rather an amusing article about the Irish party and the leadership to-day. I am supposed to be asked by Parnell to take the leadership of the party, and we all give our various views—that is to say, Davitt, Dillon, Healy, T.P. and so on. I will get a copy and send it to you.'

Though, under existing conditions, Mr. McCarthy preferred to take no part in royal functions, his abstention was due entirely to political motives. For the Sovereign herself he had no feeling but of respect and appreciation. At the time of the Jubilee a good deal of anxiety was felt as to the Queen's safety, and this was shared by Justin McCarthy. I wired to him at Stratford after the safe return of the royal procession, and he writes upon receiving my message:

[1] The Crimes Bill.

Stratford on Avon, Jubilee Day, June 21.

'I have just got your welcome telegram; it was very nice of you to think of it. So far then all is well. I fancy the real danger is over. No doubt there will be accidents in the night—people crushed perhaps—a sort of blood-tax on popular pageantry in a place like London. But that is not a calamity such as some people seem to have feared and even almost anticipated. How relieved and happy the poor old Queen herself will be when it is "bedtime and all well" as Falstaff says in the battle. Shakespeare, you see must come in, but there is an excuse for quoting him when one writes from Stratford on Avon! We have the finest of fine weather here and the country round looks almost ideally lovely. Tall old trees, green meadows, a poetic river, and incomparable churchyard on the river bank, the spire of the church mirrored in the water. All this, even if you leave out Shakespeare, makes up a charming retreat. I wish you were here. As you can't be here, I wish the "Local Man" were not here and that we had not to hold a meeting and that I had not to make a speech. What is the matter now? you will reasonably ask. Nothing, nothing, absolutely nothing that could be put into any explicable words. I suppose I have stumbled into one of my pools of melancholy, that is all—and far too much of that.'

With the date torn off, I find the following letter among those of this year. It relates to a strong division of feeling among the members of the Nationalist Party about the candidature, supported by Mr. Parnell, of Captain O'Shea for an Irish constituency, which I think occurred about this time.

'. . . I enclose telegrams received this evening and to-night. We found Arthur O'Connor—not T.P.—waiting for me. He too had had telegrams. The general effect seems to be that Parnell demands a vote of confidence and the majority will give it to him. But Healy, Biggar, and Dillon apparently will not. Arthur O'Connor and I sent off a joint telegram declaring that we would sign our names to any manifesto in favour of Parnell's leadership that did not actually commit us to approval of O'Shea's candidature. Can you follow the meaning of this hastily told tale?'

CHAPTER VI

URGED TO RESIGN.

In the summer of 1887, I stayed some little while at Royat and afterwards in Switzerland. During my absence Mr. McCarthy wrote to me regularly and at some length, concerning his position in the Irish Party which Dr. Robson Roose—his doctor—was urging him to resign.

It was in this year that Mr. McCarthy's health began to cause anxiety and showed the first symptoms of the malady which, later on, brought about so serious a collapse. I did my best, in using such influence as I possessed, to second Dr. Roose's advice, for I could not help seeing that my friend was doing himself injustice, as regards both his political and literary work, in continuing the strain and rush of public life which, clearly, were very bad for him.

I did not succeed any more than Dr. Roose had done, but perhaps that was not surprising. It needed some extraordinarily powerful counter-motive to induce Mr. McCarthy to give up active labour for that which was certainly dearer to him than any other thing in life—the Irish Cause. 'A man must fight under his own flag,' and 'a soldier may not desert on the eve of battle,' were two of the answers he would give when attacked on this subject.

Reading over some of my own letters to him which have

come back to me, I fall upon one of July 1887 which seems to me in a sense so prophetic, having been fully justified by after events, that, at the risk of obtruding myself unduly, I will quote from it :

'I feel that in a great measure you have done your work. You joined the Cause at a time when your name and reputation were of great service to it. You are more English than Irish in all your associations. This, and your known moderation, made you a link between the Irish and English parties. Now they are united. Nothing that you as a member of the Irish party could do, it seems to me, would unite them more closely. As a member of the "English" Liberal party—which I hope for later—you could help the cause at less cost to yourself and complete the work you have begun. . . . Then again, whether you resign the Vice-chairmanship or not, if you continue in the party, you naturally are in the second place, and your health unfits you for the responsibility. . . . I don't think your special gifts are those of a leader. You know I say exactly what I think, and I may be quite wrong, but that is how I feel.

'If Parnell were to die, you would not be able, unless your health greatly improves, for what would devolve upon you. In the eyes of the English, you would be responsible—whether you were so or not—for what I know you disapprove of. If Parnell's health improves—(at that time there was a talk of Parnell's own health forcing him to give up the leadership)—*you would not be needed in the same way. . . .*

'Should Parnell die, I believe that, if the Cause is to be gained, the man will be there—but I am convinced that you are not that man and that your true mission is not in politics. You have given that mission up for a time : you have sacrificed yourself, and I suppose it was fated that you should, and that the sacrifice was good. But now it seems to me that you are at the fork of the roads again, and you must not—you must not take the wrong path. It will mean sinking down—worn out nerves—ruined fortunes—and death in the end——'

Perhaps I had no right to speak so strongly—for friendship scarcely gives the claim to interfere with a man's own conception of his duty and his destiny—and anyhow my

effort at such interference was vain. But I felt, as I wrote, a strange presentiment of what the end would be.

Mr. McCarthy bore very patiently and sweetly with my urgings as, further on, his own words show:

'I had a long talk with Parnell last night. He implored me not to do anything till the session is over. He admits fully my right and duty to take care of my health, and says that if the doctor thinks I had better give up Parliament for the present—I could only put it in that way—he will not oppose a word. But he begs me not to resign my seat till the close of the session. He declares that to do so would have a terribly bad effect on English public opinion and our English alliance. He says that no one would believe that mere ill-health could compel a man to resign just at the close of a session, a seat which his constituents and his party were quite willing he should hold for the time without giving any attendance whatever. English public opinion, he argues, will simply take it for granted that I was deliberately renouncing the party for reasons which I would not publicly state. And this would, he said, do immense harm at this moment. Gladstone, he declares, would regard it as a great shock. Another thing he says is, that if at this crisis I were at once to resign, the party would be sure to elect as vice-chairman, some extreme man. He suggests that I should go abroad if I think fit, and so be absolutely away from the place and its responsibilities. I told him I thought of going to Australia in the early part of next year, and he seemed pleased and said I might do immense good to the cause in a quiet way by putting our case properly before intelligent Australians. That, he suggested, would be a perfectly good reason for resigning later on. It could easily be given out that he and I were agreed as to the necessity of my giving up Parliament for the present in consequence of the state of my health, and that partly on that account I meant to go out to Australia soon. He was very considerate and reasonable and sympathetic, only he besought me not to resign now. What people would say, he insists, is that it is not resignation, but repudiation. You will see there is some force in what Parnell says. He is looking better, but still ghostly. He stayed a long time in the House yesterday and told me he had

July '87.

been able to ride out for three hours that day. He says he is certain to get well. . . .

'We were at a crisis of the Crimes Bill last night, and I had to telegraph and give up a dinner-party.'

July '87. '. . . Already a week has gone, and I hope has been long enough to do you good. I wonder how you are passing your time, for I have not heard from you. *My* days are passed chiefly in seeing people, in going to the House, and in writing letters. The people I have had to see are mostly Americans who come to me with letters of introduction. This is a terrible time of year because of American provincials who come to town and want to be shewn over the House of Commons. I am sadly and entirely in accord with you in what you say—that to do any real literary work, it is absolutely necessary for me to give up the House of Commons. . . . On Thursday I go to Coventry to speak for the Gladstonian candidate there—we are in some hope that we shall win. Last night I went to the American Fourth of July celebrations at the Grosvenor Gallery. There was an immense crowd, chiefly Americans, and distinguished English people. Blaine was the lion of the evening. He made a speech after supper. To-night I am going to speak at the meeting of Cardinal Manning's, and there are some parties to which I am positively not going. . . .'

July 8, '87. 'I got back from Coventry this evening. . . . We had some good meetings at Coventry and lovely weather. Quite a cluster of M.P.'s were there on the Gladstonian side—Sir Charles Russell, Halley Stewart, Labouchere, Sir Thomas Esmonde, Sir Walter Foster, Reid, Carew and myself. . . . We all stayed at the same hotel. To-day Carew and I went to the Volunteer Camp, a few miles off, in Lord Leigh's Park to canvas a few people quietly there contrary to all military rules. We were invited to luncheon in the camp and very hospitably treated, although friends and enemies alike knew quite well what we were there for. . . .

'The debate on the Third Reading of the Crimes Bill is storming below.'

July 10, '87. 'I saw Dr. Roose and this is the substance of what he says. At present I'm all right; I'm qualified to make a fresh start; all alarming symptoms have disappeared, but my remaining in this condition is absolutely dependent on my not over-

working myself. He frankly tells me I must never again expect to be able to do the same kind of work I have been doing during so many years. He regards it as impossible that I could keep up literary work and parliamentary work. The attempt, he says, would soon shew its effects, and it would mean two or three years of more or less painful existence—and then !—— For the present, however, he does not see any occasion for my resigning, provided that I attend the House of Commons only when I am actually needed there on some important occasion. Curiously enough, although he is a strong Tory, he says he thinks it would be undesirable that I should retire with what he calls a splash just at the present moment. He says it would have exactly the effect that Parnell described. But he also says that if I cannot make up my mind to discontinue my regular attendance at the House of Commons, then I ought to resign at once—if I want to keep up my health—which indeed I do. So this brings us to the point at which we had already arrived ! Campbell's dinner party went off very well. Red Shirt made a little speech—very graceful and dignified in manner—which Broncho Bill interpreted. We did not smoke in your little room—ghostly that little room looked to me. I was there for a moment. Good night. God have you in His keeping.'

July 13, '87.

'The National Liberal Club—that Club with the vast house on the Embankment—have resolved to give a dinner to Parnell and the whole of the Irish Party. The idea is not merely to signify the sympathy of the Liberal Party with Ireland, but to show that the Liberal Party entirely discredit the charges made in *The Times*. This is an excellent idea, I think, and cannot but do some good. The Liberals owe us something undoubtedly. The successes at the late elections were distinctly due to us, and they say so.'

July '87.

'Parnell presided yesterday at a meeting of our party, the first he had been able to attend for a long time. The meeting was to consider our policy in regard to the Land Bill. It lasted two hours and he presided all the time. But fancy, on such a burning day as this, he wore a thick outside coat and soft felt hat—and he shivered so often ! . . . I am going to the House this evening to see Ballantine, the successful candidate for Coventry, take his seat. You will have seen what a splendid victory we won at Coventry. There will

be a tremendous Gladstonian demonstration I have no doubt. Matthews,[1] I fancy, will not resign now. Everyone felt sure that he would, but I suppose Lord Salisbury would not have it.'

July 15, '87. 'I had a busy day yesterday—a combination of business and what is called pleasure. A good deal of work to begin with then I went to a dinner-party at the Ernest Harts' where I met Lady Dorothy Nevill who was asking about you and invited me to meet Blaine at a luncheon next Wednesday. I had to go to James Knowles' evening party, and from there to the House, for the Division which we all believed was certain to take place on the second reading of the Government's Land Bill. But Lord Randolph had been attacking the Land Bill furiously and insisting that the Government must make no end of changes in it—in the interests of the Irish tenants mark you—and the Government had undertaken to give way on some points, and held out hope of being able to give way on others : and when I got down to the House I found Parnell speaking and recommending the House to take the second reading without a Division, and enable the Government to reconstruct the Bill in Committee. Then up rose Gladstone and gave his support to Parnell's suggestion and the second reading passed without a division. I went back to Knowles'! There was a great crowd. The Prince of Wales was there and all sorts of conditions of men and women. I talked a good deal to Lord Acton who is very interesting. Gladstone says he is the best educated man in England and I believe that is true. He came up and introduced himself to me, and among other nice things said that he brings up his family on "The History of Our Own Times." He said he had met you at Cannes. . . .'

July '87. 'Your letters are very interesting. How delighted I am to think that you are really beginning to profit by your stay at Royat. Have you yet made up your mind about going to Switzerland? We are holding meetings of our party now almost every day, but only to arrange our course of procedure in regard to the Land Bill. We had a second meeting yesterday on the same subject, but the third had to be put off because Tanner had gone to Ireland. Now he is formally summoned to attend in place on Thursday. This means that

[1] Mr. Henry Matthews the Home Secretary.

an official from the Speaker is to be sent to Ireland, who will, if Tanner does not come, have full authority to bring him over in custody. Tanner got into some words with Walter Long—a Tory and a very gentlemanly good-natured Tory—in the Lobby on Friday. Long seems to have spoken to him in the most friendly way, but Tanner apparently thought he was saying something offensive and thereon swore at him and denounced him in the wildest fashion. This is Long's version of the story and I have no doubt it is true. Long brought it before the House yesterday. Parnell, who spoke with admirable judgment and good taste, said he could not possibly defend the conduct of Tanner if he were guilty, but that no man could be tried in his absence. Gladstone took just the same view.'

'I am entirely pleased with your views as to my political position and your frank admission of the present force of Parnell's arguments . . . I am much perturbed and distraught by the Irish troubles. . . . The debate is storming below. I feel curiously out of it somehow. How often have I written to you from this Lobby—from this very seat! . . . I get a little anxious when I have not heard from you for some time. I don't want you to spend yourself writing letters. I want you above all things to have rest, but man is, as you know, a creature of contradictory impulses and feelings. I hope you are getting stronger. . . . And now I must go to the meeting.'

'This is a greeting for you when you arrive at Champéry. I wonder whether you had weather fine enough at Geneva to get a view of Mont Blanc. When the skies are clear there, one gets a sight of the whole range such as for completeness and beauty I don't think you can get anywhere else. . . .' July '87.

'Your letter was the more welcome for I did not think you would write to me from the Lyons Station! . . . I think you ought to stay at Champéry as long as ever you can. I will encourage you in the purpose—disinterested counsel on my part. . . . July 21, '87.

'Our dinner at the National Club came off yesterday and was a great success. It was arranged that no members of the Gladstonian Government were to take part in it: that would not have well suited either them or us: it was a dinner given to us by the Independent members of the Liberal Party —English, Scotch and Welsh. There were four toasts altogether.

The Queen : Parnell and the Irish National Party : Gladstone and the English Liberal Party : the health of the Chairman, old Dillwyn, one of the oldest members of the Liberal Party. Fancy my feelings when on getting into the reception room I was informed that it was intended I should propose the toast of Gladstone and the Liberal Party ! I had not the faintest notion that I should have to speak, and this particular toast seemed to me the most important of the evening. I began to grumble but there was no getting out of it. Parnell made a most admirable speech, full of good feeling and well calculated to impress the public mind both of England and Ireland. I did the best I could under the circumstances and succeeded beyond my expectations. When I got done with my oration I felt glad to have been associated in so marked a manner with the dinner which was really a sort of historical event. Sexton proposed the health of the Chairman in a singularly bright and humourous little speech. He is not usually good as an after-dinner speaker. It does not suit him somehow : he is made for better things : but last night he was very happy.

'So much for the dinner, I went to Lady Dorothy's luncheon at which Mr. Blaine did not turn up. The Kendals were there and Lord Alcester and a very nice Mrs. Adair.'

July '87. '. . . The landlords are all furious with the Government for having given in completely to Lord Randolph and the Liberal Secessionists with regard to the Land Bill. The Government have adopted a whole string of amendments in the interests of the Irish tenants. The very things which Parnell tried to get them to do at the opening of the Session, and which they then said they never, never, never could be induced to do by any pressure or force, they have done now. The plain reason is that the evidences of the late elections were too much for them and for the Liberal Secessionists, and they saw that something would have to be done. But the landlords are furious all the same.

'I think the outlook begins to be very favourable on the whole—if only we can keep from any disturbances in Ireland now that the Coercion Bill has become law. Pope Hennessy has been re-instated in his Government at Mauritius, but the Tories have done him justice in an unhandsome and grudging sort of way. He is content however. . . .

'I don't think I told you of my dinner party at Jacob Bright's. He is a true friend of Ireland so that I go there with pleasure. It was very interesting. I had a long talk with old Charles Villiers, the earliest leader of the Free Trade movement—long before Cobden and Bright were in Parliament. He is as vigorous a talker as ever : sharp, clear-headed, cynical—and he is eighty-five ! '

'I had a long and very interesting interview with Cardinal Manning yesterday at his house. He sent me a message that he particularly wished to see me : and so I went. He talked chiefly about Irish educational matters, but also a good deal about the Land Bill and Home Rule. He, as you know is a most resolute Home Ruler—only he did not like Gladstone's proposal to leave out the Irish representation in Westminster. (That of course is practically given up now.) Cardinal Manning asked me what was to become of the Irish and the Catholics in England—who was to look after them if there were no Irish members at Westminster ! He is a charming talker with a sweet gracious manner and quite bewitching smile. He asked me why I did not call upon him more often, and when I asked him if he happened to know Parnell personally, he answered with a good-humouredly reproachful smile : "Oh ! yes, Mr. Parnell has done me the honour of coming to see me in this house : he has been here more often than you have." July 26, '87.

'We had a long talk over various things. I had the good fortune to remember that he and not I must give the intimation that the visit was over, he being a Prince of the Church, so at the right time he dismissed me to the House of Commons.

'We had a stormy scene there yesterday. H—— lost his temper and his head because of some interruption from an English Catholic named Dr. L——, and in spite of all Parnell could urge he would not apologise and was suspended. We did not vote against the suspension : we let it go without challenging a division. . . . For the first time in the history of the party an Irish member was suspended without any protest or intervention on the part of his colleagues. The newspapers I have seen don't appear to understand this or even to take notice of it, and they describe the scene as if we were supporting H——. And this though Parnell sent for the

Clerk of the House and told him to tell the Speaker that we did not intend to oppose the motion or challenge a division. It was all very painful. I like him so much.

'I had to remain rather late at the House last night for we had some very important parts of the Land Bill in Committee and there were frequent divisions, and some were rather close. D—— made a rather imprudent speech—an outburst of emotional defiance of the Government who have on the whole been doing remarkably well. Parnell was greatly displeased and distressed. Of course when the imprudent thing is said, it would never do for Parnell to get up and repudiate his colleague in the House, so the impression gets about that what D—— or somebody else has said is the saying of the whole party. Parnell has certainly a not very enviable position of it. . . .

'. . . I did not see Campbell or the children at the Laboucheres' Shakespearean performance, and I was greatly disappointed at this. But we were a little late and had to settle down at once to dinner with a group of people whom we knew; and after dinner the performance began and it became quite dark, and I at least could see nobody and so I have nothing to tell you on the very subject of which you particularly wanted to hear something. The performance was very interesting, and certainly a very pretty sight. A great tree with wide-spreading branches was made the background and lit with electric light, and the action all took place on the natural stage thus formed by tree and lawn. The performance was rather "Midsummer Night's Dream" condensed than a mere series of selections from the comedy as I had expected it would be. Kate Vaughan was the *Hippolyta*: May Fortescue and Dorothy Dene the *Hermia* and *Helena*: Miss Norreys was the *Puck*: George Sala played *Bottom* and did it on the whole very humorously. Miss Norreys looked very pretty as *Puck*. She was dressed in a sort of scanty page's costume with shining wings: she looked very graceful and played with great animation and spirit. Then there was some walking about the grounds which I did not like, for it was dark as Erebus and I could scarcely distinguish anybody from anybody else.

'I think of getting across to Paris for a few days next week if the Land Bill is over. I am weary of London. . . . I long

for the Session to be over. . . . And I long to be settled down quietly again to a life of literary work—long to be able to call my time my own and not to have to acknowledge the claims of half the public over it. A quiet literary life—that would be my ideal.'

'I am charmed with your account of your mountain ride, your donkey and your companion: that in itself ought to make copy enough for your article. It reminded me of little bits of description in "Gil Blas." Seventy-three pages of your story! That seems to be capital progress—unless the pages are very small indeed. July '87.

'. . . We had some of the Wild West to dinner. I like their simple, manly ways very much. I like even the simple undisguised little jealousies of the women; each of them naturally thinks she is the only girl who can really ride, or can really shoot, and so on. It is seeing Nature in its child stage. You ask me if I am better? Distinctly better in the physical sense. But I feel a certain depression, which after all, I fancy, is more from a physical source than anything else, for I have nothing to complain of in life, as life goes. I don't enjoy life somehow: but I wonder if many people do really enjoy it. I am angry at myself often and rail at myself for my ingratitude to the kindly Destinies who surely have done enough for me.'

'Write to me at the Hôtel du Louvre, Paris, dear colleague, as soon as you will, for it seems to me that I have not seen your handwriting for quite a time, as the Americans say. We go on to Paris this afternoon. Professor Huxley and his family crossed over in the boat with us, and I had a long talk with him which of course drifted into politics. He is, as you know, a furious anti-Gladstonian, but he greatly admires Parnell. He says he must admire the clear, strong resolute man who cares nothing for himself, but all for his purpose. He regards us Irish Nationalists as enemes of the Empire, but open enemies, with what we believe to be a National Cause. Gladstone he looks upon as a mere self-seeking sophist—you know all that! But personally I have always liked Huxley, his talk is worth listening to.' Boulogne Aug. 1, '87.

'We shan't meet in Paris, I am sorry to say. I must be in London on the day you leave Switzerland. . . . It will give me infinite pleasure to help you with some touches for Paris, Aug. 8, '87.

your present work—and for future work " while this machine is to him "—again Shakespeare !

' Paris is empty, utterly empty. I never saw the Louvre table d'hote so thinly attended, except once when I came here just after the close of the war with Germany and the fall of the Commune. There is something curious in this seeing of a familiar city merely from the outside as the uttermost stranger might do. Somehow, I like it.'

CHAPTER VII

MORE SPEECHMAKING.

In August of that year Mr. McCarthy's health seemed to have improved. At any rate, there was no further talk of his resigning his membership in the Irish Party. The House was still sitting, and he writes in his usual diary fashion.

'. . . I have come home from the House as I had gone— by the river-steamer which makes it a romantic and picturesque sort of pilgrimage, quite different from the ordinary hansom or underground. The river was very full, and, I don't know why, it seemed to me, in its Chelsea regions, oddly like the Nile. *You* come directly into my associations with the Nile—in this way. It was in travelling to Egypt from Constantinople and then in many pleasant days and nights by the Nile that I knew Maitland Sartoris : and it was something I wrote about him in the *Daily News* that first brought me the acquaintance of his family : and it was at their house that I first met you. So there is the chain of association linking you with the Nile. I don't know why I wandered off into all this. The day was dreamy. I didn't spend it in a dream nevertheless, but did some work and wrote a heap of letters. I go to North Hunts to-morrow. North Hunts relies on me ! . . .' London, Aug. '87.

The by-elections were the writing on the wall announcing to the Tory ministry that, like Belshazzar, it was being weighed and found wanting. The Gladstonians and the Nationalists read the script with eager satisfaction ; not

the least triumphant, my literary colleague, who seldom permitted himself to be over enthusiastic.

Aug. 15, '87. '. . . We are all exultant about the result of the Northwick election. The number of the majority overleaped the most sanguine expectation. Now we begin to hope for a victory in North Hunts, and if we can only accomplish that, the Government must begin to see that the game is pretty well up with them. I do not yet venture to think we shall carry North Hunts : it is terribly uphill work there, but still we have done wonders thus far, and we may do greater wonders yet.

'We have had telegrams of congratulation pouring in. There are wild rumours even among the Conservatives, of the Government doing all sorts of things—adjourning the session until November, reconstructing the Cabinet and I know not what. I don't believe in anything of the former kind at least, but nothing can be more certain than the fact that they have received a most damaging blow. . . . We had a very successful meeting in Peterborough. Labouchere came down and Sir James Carmichael, and there were half a dozen members of Parliament scattered over various parts of the division. Ours was really a great meeting, held in a vast marquee, and there was no end of enthusiasm. . . . By the way, I went to see, not only the Cathedral, which I had never seen before, but the Exhibition of relics of Mary of Scotland. It is very interesting. The effect of the portraits is to give the idea of a very beautiful woman : and there is a mesh—perfectly genuine I believe—of poor Mary's red gold hair, which is touching.'

Aug. 31, '87. '. . . It is getting late, and I have been to the House and have written about the election. . . .

'Something else too I did. . . . I arranged for places in the dining-room below stairs to-morrow : and I shall be expecting you. If by chance I should not hear from you I shall look for you at six thirty at the door of the Ladies' Gallery in the familiar courtyard. That, I suppose, will be the last time that we shall be in the House of Commons together this session. I am going to Ireland on Friday, and by the time I come back to town, I suppose the session will be actually over or in its latest gasp. . . .'

Those little dinners in the cheerful subterranean dining-

room, where members were allowed to entertain their lady-guests, seemed to me the most distinctive feature of my House of Commons' experience. Mr. McCarthy was fond of giving these entertainments, at which my husband and I were often his guests. At his more elaborate parties the pairing was usually carefully arranged beforehand, so that when the division-bell rang and there followed a stampede from most of the tables, his table remained undisturbed. But when I dined with him informally, the division-bell had to be obeyed, and I was used to being left alone with book or newspaper until he returned and the delayed course was brought back again.

Then, after dinner, coffee and cigars on the Terrace—a picturesque scene with its fantastic effects of light. From the windows of the great front of the building, a yellow glow pouring down upon the broad tessellated causeway, with its clearly discernible track in the middle, worn by the pacing of many feet, and all its little tables drawn up by the parapet and surrounded by men and women filling the air with a soft buzz of voices. Pale lamps set at intervals; and beyond, the river, dark and mysterious, making a dull lapping sound against the stone buttresses whenever a steamer went by. Long bright bars crossing the shadowy surface—reflections from the brilliant lamps along the opposite embankment, their pattern broken by the black shapes of moving barges and by firefly specks of light from the different craft moving or stationary.

I never tired of the Terrace—it seemed a world by itself and one had here a keen sense of far-reaching issues and of isolation from sordid and trivial influences.

From Ireland there comes:

'. . . Only a short letter to let you know of my arrival. We had Philip Stanhope in the train with us—brother of the Minister of War—going to confront the police and the

Dublin, Sept. 4, '87.

soldiery of Enniskillen. He talked very cheerfully and does not think there will be any disturbance, but we are all rather uneasy here.

'I have been rushing about and seeing lots of people. In Dublin one has to call on several persons who would be displeased and disappointed if you didn't call—the Archbishop, the Lord Mayor, the head of the Catholic University, the National League people and various private friends. I find Dublin dreary. I feel that, being in Ireland, I ought to be in Clare with Dillon and Stanhope. . . .

'However the way is clear enough, though at present not particularly bright. Do you know what sailors call a "clear, dark night." No moon, not much starlight, the sky and waters dark, but no mist, no uncertainty, and one can see his way. Is it not so in life sometimes?'

Londonderry, Sept. 7, '87.

'So stupid of me, dear Colleague. I quite forgot to say anything about Steele and your *Globe* articles. . . .

'About Steele—well, you might perhaps say that he is the author of the sweetest most touching and noblest thing ever said concerning a woman—the saying in his description of Lady Elizabeth Hastings that "to love her was a liberal education." This was for a long time ascribed to Congreve, but it is really Steele's.

'. . . We have a bazaar here, for a great Catholic public hall which has just been built. I hope to be at the opening ceremonial which begins at noon. You know how fond I am of all that sort of thing! I gave a lecture last night—an incoherent discourse, rambling on for an hour over things in general—for the benefit of an Irish Literary Institute here. . . . We had a very good audience. I deliver another lecture on Friday. I can't leave Derry till the bazaar is over. In a way I like it—not the Bazaar, but the people—the earnestness, the enthusiasm, the sweet, simple, kindly Sisters of Mercy, the patriotic, manly, unpretending priests—there is a refreshing flavour about the whole of it after a season of what in London we call society.'

Londonderry, Sept. 8, '87.

'I am waiting for some friends to go with me over some of the ship-building yards here where I shall be expected to talk to the workmen—a sort of thing at which I am not very good. The crowd was great at the opening of the Bazaar yesterday. Some Irish ballads were sung, very badly, but the music and

the memories affected me more deeply than I should care to admit.

'. . . An event unparalleled in the history of Derry has happened. The Protestant Bishop [1]—my strongest opponent—has actually called upon me! We have been formally invited to dinner at the Palace. Derry is convulsed. People say the Orange papers will positively denounce the Bishop for his hospitality to the Nationalist member.'

'Just received an urgent summons from our whips to be in the House of Commons on Monday when Sir William Harcourt raises the question of the proclaimed meeting at Clare, but I don't see how I can be there without throwing over an arrangement made here long since.' Londonderry, Sept. 9, '87.

'The days have gone well here, except the weather—each day a succession of long drenching showers, with fitful glimpses of a ghostlike sun. Our great object now in Derry is to try and soften sectarian feeling. It is evident that the Protestant Bishop is of the same way of thinking, by the manner in which he has gone out of his way to give a welcome to me. It is looked upon by my people here as a distinct holding out of the olive branch. His dinner-party is on Monday, the night of the debate on the Clare meetings, and of course under other conditions I should have gone back at once. But my friends here say it is of far more importance to Derry that I should stay and accept the Bishop's hospitality than that I should go back to give a vote on a question which is merely a foregone conclusion, and in which my vote could have no effect. Is it not odd that so much should be made of a Bishop's civility?—that an invitation to dinner should be regarded as a sort of political event? However it is so. As I was forewarned, the Bishop has already been attacked by letters in the Orange papers. . . . Londonderry, Sept. 10, '87.

'. . . Blood has been shed at Michelstown at a meeting attended by Labouchere and other English members and by Dillon. The police seem to have acted outrageously. They it was who did the killing—they shot two men—one a very old man. As the killing was done, I am glad it was in the presence of and under the eyes of English members who can talk of it in the House of Commons.'

'. . . I have to remain to-night to take part in the meeting Dublin, Sept. 14, '87.

[1] Bishop Alexander.

which is to welcome the delegations of English Home Rulers who are coming over. . . . In any case I am anxious to have a share in what promises to be an important demonstration. I rather chafe at being away from the House of Commons these recent days, doing merely local work in Derry. Yet it is necessary and has done good.

'The dinner was very interesting. I enclose you a paragraph cut from the Dublin *Freeman* which will illustrate Orange sentiment on the subject.

'I fear we shall have a terrible winter in Ireland. The Government seems resolved to goad the people to madness. I look to the friendship and support of Englishmen as our best assurance of patience and peace. But the Cause is safe, happen what will—only we long for a bloodless victory. I am to address a meeting of working men at Finsbury, attacking the House of Lords—would you come?'

Cheyne Gardens, Sept. '87.

'I was so glad to see you to-day even for those few minutes. . . . I have been reading "Binbian Jo"[1] very carefully . . . have made a few slight alterations, but should like to have another talk with you before you get on any farther.'

Friday.

'I have also been reading Jefferies' book[2] with wonder and delight—emotion of various kinds. It reminds me somehow of Jean Paul Richter. I understand all the feelings of it. I think I have myself felt all that, although I never had my feelings put into words for me until he put them. The book is not to be criticized, it is to be felt. All the criticism in the world could not touch the living fact that men and women do feel like that—but I wonder what did the Great Big Stupid say to it? Did it say anything? Did the Great Big Stupid read it? I must say that I have very little right to scoff at the Great Big Stupid, for I should probably not have read it if you had not brought it to me.

'I have been thinking since reading it that I have of late years grown more and more self-absorbed—I don't mean into my own personality, but into the pursuits which are necessarily mine, and that I seldom look on Nature and scenery with

[1] The hero of a novel afterwards published in collaboration with Mr. McCarthy, under the title of *The Ladies' Gallery*, and in substitution for *The Rebel Rose* which was to have been serialised as *The Ladies' Gallery*. I had written the first volume of this book at Royat. Mr. McCarthy now took over the second, and the third was joint work.

[2] *The Story of My Heart*, by Richard Jefferies.

clear and open eyes. Something comes like a mist or a veil between them and me.

'Perhaps this is merely physical overwork: perhaps too much politics: but anyhow, as you say, there it is: and I don't much like it. I think that only for your sympathy and your influence in these latter years, I might have almost wholly lost the real artistic sense. One cannot be a dull materialist with you. I don't mean that as a compliment: to me it is simply a statement of fact—of fact which I appreciate.'

I have been tempted, at the risk of seeming too egotistic, to leave in those last sentences. It is a deep satisfaction to me to think that I may have exercised any such influence over my dear old friend.

Quoting further:

'. . . Just had a letter from my friend Miss E—— V——. She has an article accepted for *Belgravia* and is a little elated. Now she is perturbed about the difficulty of correcting the proofs and wants to learn how to do it. Poor girl! Starting on that career—that course which is strewn with the bones of so many failures, and in which success is, after all, not so much! You will say that I am in a despondent mood, but I am not. What put the thought into my head, is that in her eyes I am a living illustration of the most brilliant and bewildering success!'

'I liked your visit yesterday: it soothed and cheered me. I hope to be well—I mean to be well—to-morrow. I kept indoors all last night and to-day: went to bed fearfully early —for me—and dreamed a long disconnected dream in which Gladstone and Mrs. Gladstone and Herbert and you and I and various Irish landlords and Irish troubles generally and our dealings with the Harpers, were all twisted up in a kind of inextricable medley!' Oct. 5, '87.

'. . . There is not any cause for alarm, but the weather has been terribly against me, I am ever so much better to-day, although we had some fearfully long drives last night in hansoms to get to and from various stations. I don't see how I could go out of England this winter I have made so many engagements. . . . Oct. 11, '87.

'I have had a letter from Campbell and am delighted to hear that you have had fine weather. I shall expect to see you looking much better when you come back. I love to hear of the freedom and quietness of your surroundings. I shall look for a letter from you to-morrow morning. . . . To-night I lecture at the Birkbeck Institution in the City—on "Modern Fiction"—and I haven't yet given one moment's thought to what I am going to say. I wish I could talk it over with you for half an hour.

'. . . I have been down in the City—the day was very fine though cold, and there were wonderful sun-edged clouds. The world seemed to have something in it to charm one—if one did not let his eyes get dimmed and dulled to clouds and skies and sunrays, as in London one is apt to do. . . .'

Oct. 13, '87. '. . . I haven't anything new to tell you. I have not heard anything about politics or seen anybody who would be likely to know anything. I am anxious about all the meetings to be held in Ireland, wondering if the Government will try to put them down by force: wondering what will happen. . . .'

Again the wire-pullers were at work. The end of the Tory Government seemed to be within reasonable prognostication. It was supposed that Coercion, as before, would prove the rope by which it would hang itself.

And now, in view of a possible Liberal and Nationalist coalition, what were the terms which the Irish would accept?

It may have been illness; it may have been accident; it may have been a woman; or, what was more likely, it may have been a masterly stroke of policy. In any case, Parnell was not to be found. As was his custom when underground dealings were on foot, he had disappeared. Mr. McCarthy was as usual applied to. But even he could not find the 'Errant Chief.'

He writes:

'I have failed—altogether failed in my efforts to get within touch of my absent friend Parnell. I suppose the thing must be given up as far as he is concerned. I have not offered

any advice or co-operation of my own. I thought it better to let the suggestion come, if it come at all, from the other side. But in truth, I could not be of much use : I could only give my opinion as to what I thought ought to be done, or probably would be done. If it were a question downright of what Ireland would assent to, there is no man living but that one, who could possibly pretend to give an authoritative answer. The very most popular of our party among the Irish people—Dillon or Healy or O'Brien—would not attempt to do it. One man only could do it—and he could—and we can't get to him or within speech or hearing of him.

'So much for politics !

'Winter has made its unwelcome presence felt prematurely —like a sort of spiteful guest who, knowing you don't want him at all, vents his spleen by coming long before the appointed hour.'

'I have just worked off an article for my "Youth's Companion" and feel that I want to refresh myself by writing a few lines to you. I walked across to Farm Street Church with my "Siamese Twin" [1]—my friend and namesake. He has just come back from a visit to Lourdes, in France, the scene of the miracle as you know. He went there not unwilling to be convinced, but he is not convinced, says he is afraid conviction is not in him. He is a Catholic by tradition : he says his forefathers suffered for the National faith and that he would regard it as a shame and a desertion to leave it, even if he disbelieved in it : and he does not disbelieve in it : he says that it is the only religion he could believe in, so he clings to it and waits, thinking perhaps that belief may come in the end. I think I understand his mood of mind. . . . I think he would make "copy" some day when "copy" is again to be made.' Oct. '87.

Justin McCarthy had been brought up a devout Catholic, and, in the later years of his life, attended mass regularly with his daughter, and was a firm believer in the tenets of the Church of Rome. Here, it may be interesting to quote from a letter of a few months later, in which he speaks of his

[1] Mr. James McCarthy, though no relative of my literary colleague, who was—or had been—in the service of the Siamese Government.

membership of faith as a national rather than a spiritual affinity and professes to be not greatly interested in the dogmatic and mystical questions involved. But he goes on to say :

'Even on those questions, the Catholic Church seems to me more likely to be right than any other—but I put those mysteries aside as insoluble for you and me—and I only think that if one is beaten a good deal by the storms and the buffets of the world, the safest and the most inviting harbour is to be found in that church. Perhaps some other and profounder faith may come too in its time, but I would let it come if it will—I would not yearn for it—I would not even seek it—there seems something morbid and even artificial in the deliberate quest after it : if there is genuine efficacy in it—then I suppose it will come. But anyhow, I feel that, with some of us at least, it is to be the Church of Rome or no Church at all.'

And then again, later on, at a difficult period of crisis, he writes of the feeling that comes to us all, even the most sceptical—the feeling of a need to pray :

'I have felt some of that feeling lately. I am not religious and I have not prayed, but I have felt at moments that there might be the quickening of some feeling in me more safe to guide than the friendship of man or the love of woman. I have not tried to force the feeling, have hardly even tried to encourage it. If the living waters are to flow, they will flow of themselves. . . .'

There was in truth a deep strain of the devotional in Justin McCarthy. How could it have been otherwise with one so ready to sacrifice his worldly welfare for an ideal? The world never realised this side of his nature. I feel sure that only those nearest him fully realised it. To me it was always evident in his words, his writings, his works and ways. He was a dreamer, and, had his lot been cast differently, his dreams might have taken more vivid and

forcible shape. As he himself writes in another letter which perhaps I had best quote from here :

'My dreamings, as you say, have been modified by conditions of life which have forced me sometimes to play the part of a man of action. I have always felt that I had a great advantage in that I have been to so large an extent involved in this political cause and am carried out of other things by it—at moments almost forgetting everything but that. . . .'

'I am going to send you a panel portrait of me—that of which I told you. I hope you will like it. I think it very good as a photograph, but it makes me a much more imposing personage than I am. We can have it as a frontispiece for those memories and reminiscences of which we have often spoken : and then if perchance I get down to posterity at all, I shall go down as one of stately, not to say commanding presence ! . . .'[1] Oct. 16, '87.

'. . . I have been writing letters—to me the most wearisome and uninteresting of all work—to the general public—the British public "who may like me yet—marry and amen !" Much of my correspondence comes from the fact that some of the British public do like me and want to hear me speak. Three out of every four of my letters contain urgent requests to me to make a speech or to deliver a lecture. It is a sign of reviving popularity which may come in useful. And I don't think the lectures will do me any harm, though I was not very well to-day—weak and shivery.'

He writes when on his English lecturing tour :

'I am in the house of Mr. Wardle, the Liberal member of this division of the county. He is very nice and his people are very nice. I have given my lecture and it has gone off very well, I think. But I am not very well, and the dinner-party rather wearied me. . . . Highfield, Burton-on-Trent (no date).

'I am thinking about you toiling away at your dramatic work. I want the play to be a success, but you were looking tired on Thursday. . . . If you are not too busy, may I lunch with you on Friday ? '

[1] The photograph to which Mr. McCarthy referred is reproduced according to his wish as the frontispiece to this book.

Gawthorpe Hall, Oct. 27, '87.

'This is a very interesting place—a great stone hall or castle, looking on the outside a good deal like a gaol—inside, all stone and oak and arched passages that echo to every footfall.

'The antique beds have carven oak roofs over them. The room I sleep in remains as it was two hundred years ago. Shaw Lefevre, who was a member of Gladstone's Government, is here, and in the smoking-room last night he told me some things I did not know; and I told him some things he did not know!'

20 Cheyne Gardens, Nov. '87.

'I have got home and received your welcoming and welcome letter. . . . Yes I shall dine with you to-morrow (Friday) with all the pleasure in the world, and I will take you to my oration[1] on Sunday and shall be only too glad to have your company. . . . My luncheon in Curzon Street is with Mr. Roundell—an English Liberal who was in Parliament and lost his seat as a Gladstonian. . . . He is a friend of Lady Russell's, she wants me to talk over things with him.'

Nov. 7, '87.

'My luncheon has been very interesting and pleasant, dear colleague. Verestchagin is in every way a most remarkable man, full of ideas, who has been everywhere and brought back something from each place that he has seen and each people that he has studied. Shall we go to see his paintings some day, you and I? He is going to Ireland to paint an eviction scene which he thinks would impress public opinion all over the world. I so wish you had been with us to-day. He talks very good English which was a relief to me. I will get him to come to dinner or luncheon when I get back from my fortnight's tour—for some day when you can come. I have asked Whiteing to come and dine with you at my house: he will come whenever I can arrange it. . . .

'To-morrow I go to Norwich. If you want to ask me anything, direct care of J. J. Colman, M.P., Carrow House, Norwich. I shall leave Norwich Tuesday afternoon, and shall be in town shortly after six. I shall come to you, if I don't hear to the contrary, to dinner. Shall have to drive home first, but perhaps you will give me a few minutes grace if I should be delayed. Then we might arrange to see Verestchagin's pictures.

'I have had a letter to-day from the Editor of the *Youth's Companion* full of satisfaction about my first article on the

[1] A lecture Mr. McCarthy gave at Finsbury.

House of Commons. I've sent him the second and have four more to send. He hopes to be in London in the spring and I shall get up something of a dinner for him at the House of Commons in which you and Campbell must take part. I wonder if you are dining at Herbert Paul's on Sunday—I hope so.'

'I have just finished an article on a grim subject—the death of the Crown Prince of Germany. The Crown Prince is not dead yet so far as I know. Perhaps he may get over his attack and live for many years. But you know the cruel necessities of newspapers. We have to be ready with our article on a prominent man before the man dies lest there should not be time after, so I have been lamenting the death of the Crown Prince! I hope it will be all the better for him, because in ever so many cases where a man had been lying on the point of death, and I have written an article on him lamenting him as gone, he has lived and flourished amazingly. I do hope that he too, will live.' Nov. 10, '87.

'This is written at a little hotel at Pontypridd where I am quartered for the night. I was at a private house last night and to-day—kind pleasant people. The father a widower, very proud of his travels, having been in Rome and Naples and Venice, and once in Trieste! Three daughters all alike—pretty, amiable—all with a curious motherly way with them, though very young, and got, I fancy, from being early left in charge of still younger brothers. A touch that ought to be brought out in fiction. I never saw it there so clearly or markedly as in real life. Nov. 15, '87.

'This little hotel is a picturesque place and the day is fine and sunny. There are hills all round. My heart goes out to grey and green hills like those of my own land.

'I rush back to-morrow; get into town in time to swallow a dinner with the Hennessys and give my lecture in far off Clapton: and I leave for Lancashire early the next morning and from there go on to Scotland. . . .

'I shall soon have the local man upon me . . . you know him in the two hemispheres—and I must bring this to a close.'

Most people will have forgotten now the talk and bitter feeling aroused among Nationalists and English Radicals by the arrest of Mr. William O'Brien and his sufferings in

prison, which indeed were made to appear tragi-comic by the comments in opposition newspapers upon his refusal to wear prison garments. Justin McCarthy was deeply moved by the indignity offered his compatriot and the effect imprisonment was having upon Mr. O'Brien's health.

Nov. 17, '87. 'It makes me wild to think of William O'Brien. Sometimes I can almost find it in my heart to wish that he should die in their prison—his ghost would be worse for them than his living presence. We shall have bitter work in the House next Session. I almost wish the time was come. One feels so helpless, so incapable of any effective expression while the House is not sitting. One chafes and thinks he ought to be doing something. And what is there to do?'

Nov. 19, '87. 'I am staying with a very old friend who worked with me on the *Morning Star*. He is now editor of the *Scotsman*—Unionist I am sorry to say—and is very prosperous and influential. We spent the greater part of to-day at Dalmeny, Lord Rosebery's place near. When Lord Rosebery heard of my being here, he telegraphed to ask us to go over, and we went. He and I had a long walk and talk together—of course about politics. He thinks the Government are playing our game as fast as they can. He was very anxious to learn all that I could tell him of our former negotiations with the Tories and how far Lord Salisbury was acquainted with them. He thinks the Radicals did not make nearly as much as they ought to have done of Lord Carnarvon's business. He is on the whole very hopeful, but he wishes Gladstone would not go into the wood-selling line. He says it makes people laugh and does him harm. We come back here to dinner—a Scottish judge and his wife and a professor dined with us. The judge told capital stories.'

Nov. 21, '87. 'To-morrow will be my birthday. I shall be fifty-seven! I don't feel fifty-seven somehow, but there's the grim fact! I shall spend my birthday partly in Glasgow and partly in Ayr—by the banks of Bonnie Doon. Yesterday I had a long ramble with my host's son—a young barrister—round about all the historic places of Edinburgh which I am very fond of, but had not seen for several years. John Dillon has been speaking

[1] Mr. Charles Cooper, Editor of the *Scotsman*.

in Scotland, but I have not seen him so far. H——, I am sorry to say, has been using very violent language in Ireland, threatening Balfour that if O'Brien should die, there will be "life for life," and so forth. All that sort of talk is a dreadful mistake at any time and it is inexcusable now. . . . I begin to wish very much for the reassembling of the House. Now about you. Your letter makes me think that you are far from well. It is so hard to be driven to the alternative of being pent within doors or going out in this dreary weather and taking cold. I like our British winters less and less, and they don't suit you at all.'

Ayr, Nov. 22, '87.

'I have had a very busy day. We had a really great meeting at Glasgow last night—a vast hall packed full—a real success in enthusiasm as well as in numbers. Then to-day I had to accept luncheon at the Liberal Club, and after that to get on to Ayr to give my lecture "The House of Commons," which is becoming to me very like our old familiar friend "The Cause of Ireland" in America. Don't you remember that "Cause of Ireland" which you heard expounded from so many platforms?'

Newcastle-on-Tyne, Nov. 27, '87.

'I am writing this with the pen you sent me and you will see that it works very well when you make allowance for the very awkward hand it has to work with. But this is horribly written, for it is so cold here that although there is a blazing fire in the room, my fingers will hardly hold the pen.

'. . . I am so delighted that you like "Esmond" so much. I love it and have always loved it, and I confess I was pleased at the comparison you make about *Colonel Henry*.[1] I shall teach you to love Shakespeare when we have a little more leisure. . . .

'What a tragedy that was about the Dalhousies! I knew him well—her only slightly. He was a fine creature—devoted to her. She was very handsome and attractive. I was staying at a house in Dundee when the news came of her

[1] This in answer to a passage in a letter of mine which I quote, for it is a true expression of the feeling I had then, and shall always retain, about Justin McCarthy:

'*I have been thinking of you to-day and yesterday—you will never guess why! I have been re-reading "Esmond." And in truth you are more like Colonel Henry than any man I have ever known. I think it is the most beautiful of all novels. . . . And it seemed quite the right thing somehow to read of the Lord Ashburnham of that day who was a Tory and admired Beatrix.*'

death. My hostess at once said : "To-morrow or next day we shall hear of *his* death." The news came on the morrow.

'I am on the point of starting for Edinburgh and write this line while waiting for some local men who are coming to bid me a formal farewell. We had a national meeting yesterday at which of course I made a long speech : then in the evening I lectured in a large theatre which was crammed with people. Both affairs went off very well, but both in one day were a little fatiguing. Luckily for me I was in good voice. I have an idea for one of your short articles "Dyspepsia at dinner" or some such name—the idea being what we see at every dinner party nowadays—somebody who can only drink whisky and water : someone else who must have only lemon squash : another who must not touch anything but claret and hot water—and so on : all interchanging cheerful expositions concerning their divers ailments and their doctors !'

Park Hotel, Cardiff, Dec. 7, '87.

'I have been having good audiences and I stayed with some nice people last night. But I was shewn over Hereford Cathedral this morning till I was fairly tired out : it was very interesting but all the same I was so tired that I made an excuse for coming on to Cardiff by an earlier train, for I foresaw, so long as I was in Hereford, the kindness of my friends would not let me do anything. My hostess is a bright kind pretty young woman but endowed with eyelids so long, that when she lowered them in the ordinary way of mortal they shut up her eyes altogether. The appearance this put on her face every other minute had a gruesome effect on me. This morning she was running downstairs singing and I was not looking, and those terrible eyelids were down and she didn't see me and she had literally plunged into my arms before she opened her eyes. Do bear this in mind and let us make use of it in some story some day.'

Cork, Dec. 9, '87.

'I am here in the city which was my birthplace and which I left for good and all thirty-six years ago. There is always to me something touching and tender about these old scenes : and this house looks on the river. The drive was beautiful : the weather mild and bright with a poetic west wind. I had a fearfully rough crossing last night and the contrast here makes things look the more winsome. . . .

'I have been strongly urged to attend a meeting which Lord Rosebery is to hold at Oldham on Tuesday but I have

sent a refusal. I shall be at Mrs. M——'s till Tuesday and hope to give you a helping hand with your work on Tuesday evening. It is hard for me to be of any real help at a distance; one can't, as you say, hit the sequence of ideas. . . .'

'I had a great audience at Cork and they had to send away hundreds of people. So after all a prophet may—but that has been said too often.' Dec. 11, '87.

'I have been travelling all day—changed trains four times to cross two English counties. I shan't be able to sleep much to-night for I am to be banqueted by the Liberal Club here after the lecture, and I must leave by a six o'clock train in the morning to get to Taunton. . . . I was so glad to receive your little line and to learn that the operation has been put off. I am distressed about you. I wish you could have a little rest from work of any literary or artistic kind. For the present I fear that can't well be, what with the play and the Sketches and the "People" papers—to say nothing of "Binbian Jo." But I suppose all this is better and less wearing even than to be a neglected author striving and straining after work. And you like your work.' Hull, Dec. 15.

'You will see by the heading that we are seven miles from a post office. A man and a horse goes once a day into Taunton with letters. . . . Our meeting is to be there this afternoon where I will post this letter. The last I suppose that I shall write you on this trip. . . . Culmhead, Taunton, Dec. 17, '87.

'The house is full of guests. Lord Ripon among the number, and a son-in-law of John Bright who is a staunch Home Ruler. Of course all the guests here are Home Rulers, but my host is the only resident here of any position who is not a Conservative or Unionist. I met the other night a Unitarian Minister who was in America soon after our visit to Salem and who stayed with Professor Morse and heard about you, and he told me that he had been reading your American Sketches and was delighted with them—especially the Salem one. . . . It is very pleasant to know by various evidences here how well those sketches have been received. I am quite sure the Australian ones will be a success. I wish I had the magic looking-glass of the fairy tale that I might see in it whether you were better. Did you see a fearful portrait of me among other Irish members in the *Pall Mall* the other day? I saw it here this morning. I am weary of all this exile.'

CHAPTER VIII

ANONYMOUS COLLABORATION

The beginning of 1888 found Mr. McCarthy still on what he called 'the stump,' with only brief intervals in London snatched in the course of his lecturing tour.

Leamington, Jan. 25, '88.

'There are to be two meetings here, dearest Colleague—one at four o'clock and one at night and a dinner in between, so I will hasten to send you a line before the work sets in. I got here soon after three, and now am eager to hear of any fresh developments about your play. I had the enclosed from the Opera Comique this morning, so you see there is likely to be a very full house. . . .'

Birmingham, Jan. 26, '88.

'From the enclosed advertisement, you might be led to imagine, dearest Colleague, that the Birmingham Liberals expected me to perform the marvellous feat of being in two places at once. The meaning of the thing is no doubt that the two meetings will be going on at the same time, and that when I have fired off my speech at one, I shall be carried away to deliver a speech at the other. I made my two speeches yesterday—that in the evening very long. The audience on both occasions were very enthusiastic. To-day I go out to a luncheon, and I fear also to a dinner, and then my meetings. I don't quite know what Dr. Roose would say to all these energetic proceedings, but I don't so far feel by any means the worse for them, and am indeed better in physical condition than I was last week. To-morrow I have another meeting on and shall return to London in the evening but not, I am sorry to say, in time to have any chance of seeing you.'

'The enclosed will interest you. Something big is going on evidently. . . . I can't get within touch of our friend so far.' No date.

Another abortive attempt to bridge the Liberal chasm! And again, a search for the 'Wanderer.' But Parnell was wiser perhaps than the wire-pullers who wanted him.

'It is blowing a sort of hurricane here, and getting about is difficult. Yesterday in Leamington the weather was soft, mild, spring-like, with a west wind that brought youth itself in its breathing. There is a pretty view of the river from the bridge, and the sinking sun and rising moon were both in the sky. The sky was faint purple and faint green and opal, and it was so lovely that I wished I had you there to enjoy it with. But I had only an English Radical member who didn't care in the least about it, so I suppressed my rapture and talked local politics while I looked at the river and the sky. It is sometimes so in life, don't you find? . . .' Jan. '88.

'I have just sent to the *Daily News* something about poor Mr. Sartoris and his chansonette.[1] It may possibly be in time for to-morrow's paper. Will you keep a look-out for it? We are staying with very pleasant bright people here—Sir Walter Foster, a Radical M.P.—a doctor by profession—and his wife and daughter. Last night after my lecture, we went to a Radical popular soirée, where he and I had to make speeches. To-night I shall have to give an entirely new lecture—to which I have not given and shall not have time to give one single moment's thought—on great American cities. Well, never mind! I daresay I shall get through it somehow. . . . By the way I shall be in town again on Thursday night—am to dine at Lucy's—and rush off again on Friday morning. Ashfield, Edgbaston, Jan. 31, '88.

'We are locked up in snow here to-day, and there is more coming. . . . Do you long for the winter to be over? I do—and yet I reproach myself sometimes for the longing. The early summer always disappoints, and then it brings the dinner parties and all the rest . . . and oh! my dear colleague, you have no notion how selfish I can be. In some ways this winter has been bright for me, and why should I grumble? . . .'

'I wish you were here. The place is very beautiful—all Bournemouth, Feb. 5, '88.

[1] Mr. Frederick Sartoris died about this time. He wrote occasionally charming French verses.

sea and cliffs and pinewoods. This hotel to which Sir Henry Wolff recommended me, is a long way from the town and charmingly quiet. Only there are too many invalids comparing notes on their various maladies.' [1]

Feb. 8, '88. 'The eventful day.[2] I don't feel much discouraged because of the unsatisfactory rehearsal. I know how crude and out of sort things look to the very last. Anyhow I send you sympathy in whatever happens.'

Feb. 9, '88. 'I have received your telegram, but cannot judge from it whether the battle was won or lost, or merely drawn. I shall wait for the papers and your letter which I expect to have this evening. I shall be in the House of Commons to-morrow about half-past six. Tell me how you are circumstanced for the evening, and I will wire to you from the House.'

Upstairs Lobby, Feb. 23, '88. 'I am waiting for the division and I send you this line from the old familiar place. I was so glad to see you to-night —so glad you came in order that you may be able to compare some plays with other plays! Was it not awful stuff, dragging conventional, commonplace—the real as utterly absent as the ideal? The acting of Beerbohm Tree alone redeemed the thing from unmingled wretchedness, and even he was cruelly hampered and handicapped by the poverty of the part. . . .

'I wish you a quick and pleasant journey and a good spell of invigorating and reviving rest. . . .'

Feb. '88. 'I have come back from such a dreary snowy drive from Highbury, where I had to give a lecture, and to get to which caused me just to miss by a few minutes a rather important division in the House. So I am out of humour. . . . Parnell has been urging me again to go to Australia. I don't mean to go, but I want to talk this over with you.

'It is a comfort to think that you have not lost anything by leaving London, for the weather with you could not possibly be colder than it is with us. You are almost sure to have sunlight or light of some sort while we are plunged in drear grey semi-livid darkness.

'I have been working at "The Rebel Rose." So far I

[1] It would hardly be doing justice to Bournemouth of to-day—the bright, almost foreign-looking town with its gay winter gardens, its luxurious hotels and crowd of pleasure seekers—to describe it as a mere resort of invalids. Bournemouth has immensely grown and improved since Mr. McCarthy wrote in 1888.

[2] The date on which a play of mine was produced.

like it very much indeed, but I really can't make out which of us did this, and which of us did that. . . . I heard of you last night. You will be amused. I sat next to a lady at dinner who told me that she liked "The Right Honourable" much the best of any novels I had written: and that it is the only one you had written which she really did like. She apologized for her candour, but I told her I wasn't offended and that I was sure you would not be. Then she told me her husband knew two of your sons—one was a man of fashion and the other a great sportsman. I explained that they were not your sons—that you had not quite attained the years of matronhood which would allow of your having sons of that age.

'"Surely," she said, "she is not a young woman?"

'I said, "Oh yes, I should call her a young woman."

'Then she asked, "How do you manage to get on with her?"

'I said, "We get on admirably."

'"I suppose you must really like her?"

'"Oh yes, I really like her."

'"You never quarrel?"

'"No, we never quarrel."

'"I take it for granted that neither of you is very self-conceited?"

"'No, I don't think either of us is very self-conceited." So the subject dropped.

The men were all politicians except an elderly man, a judge with a beautiful young wife. There was much lamentation over Doncaster. We had a candidate who never ought to have been put forward. Some say he was Schnadhorst's candidate: some say the Grand Old Man's. I fear we shall lose Deptford as well.

'We have changed the hours of sitting in the House of Commons at a stroke: no more sittings until four in the morning: everything must end by one o'clock, unless by a special vote taken beforehand to prolong some particular sitting. We on our side are a good deal dashed by the failure at Doncaster. It is a bad failure and no mistake. We had a weak candidate: *they* a tremendously strong one. I am going to dine at Charles Russell's to-night and shall probably hear a good deal about it. . . .'

Feb. '88. '. . . Mr. Bentley has pencilled several criticisms on our second volume, dear colleague. He objects to our aristocrats being made to say " ain't " for " isn't "—and " redoocin' " for " reducing " on the ground that aristocratic ladies would not talk in that way—which they do ! "

The book referred to was ' The Rebel Rose,' of which mention has been made in connection with the visit to America. We were now going over the manuscript of the novel for final corrections, having arranged for its publication with Mr. Bentley who was ' jibbing ' a little at its political and Jacobite tendencies.

McCarthy writes concerning our new venture :

'. . . The requiem article [1] you might open in some way like the enclosed—the kind of line would be to shew that you attached no real importance to the Jacobites, but nevertheless admitted that they have a little cause of their own. . . .

' As to Bentley. . . . I fear the political question does influence him. . . . As to publishing the book anonymously, I should like that of all things. . . . I think you might safely reassure him as regards any idea of claims to be made, either of property or succession, on our gracious Sovereign. If however he is at all alarmed, it would perhaps be better to withdraw the book, but I will talk that over with you to-morrow. . . . '

Feb. 29, '88. '. . . I had a pleasant dinner-party last night—small which I always like. Lord Edmond FitzMaurice was there and Willy Bright—John Bright's Home Rule son—with his wife and a few other people. . . .

'. . . I have been asked by the Speaker to become one of the five men appointed under the new rules to preside in the House in the absence of the Speaker himself or the paid Chairman of Committees. Fancy your colleague presiding solemnly over a debate in the House of Commons ! The offer was really a very high compliment, and I took it so. But of course I didn't think of accepting it : it would tie me to the House far too much. I gave however what would be ample

[1] An article I had been asked to write on the modern Jacobite observance of the anniversary of King Charles I's death.

reason for refusing, even if I were inclined to accept. I never could be sure of recognizing a member's face at a distance and should be often calling the wrong man. . . .'

'. . . You will see by this address that I am doing duty as a Royal Commissioner to-day. There was some important matter coming on and I felt bound to attend. We have lost Deptford, but we have greatly pulled down the Tory majority and that indeed was all we could possibly have hoped to do, so we are not dissatisfied. As if I had not enough of public duties already, a lady of whom I never heard before, has just died and left some money to be applied for the benefit of poor working Irishwomen, and has appointed me co-trustee with a Miss Mitchell of whom I never heard either. I am told there will possibly be a suit in Chancery about it. . . . I have asked the advice of some really eminent lawyers in the House about it—one great thing about the House is that you can find the experts of almost every calling there, and always willing to give you advice for nothing !—and they recommend me not to accept the trust. So I am to get out of the responsibility without preventing the application of the money to the right people. Is it not odd—in order to get out of being trustee, I have to execute a formal deed of disclaimer ? "Old Father Antic, the law," says Shakespeare. The sum of money is not very large—about six thousand pounds I am told : and it is to be employed in some way for the benefit of Irishwomen engaged in the linen and lace manufacture in Ireland. . . .' Royal Commission of Market Rights and Tolls, Mar. 1, '88.

'I had some talk last night with the Grand Old Man. I was walking up the House during the debate : he was coming down the floor. He stopped me, turned me round and brought me down to the Bar, where, as you know, one may stand and talk. Then with much energy of gesture he gave me his views about the debate—views which were also mine. A great many eyes were turned upon us. Mar. 3, '88.

'Last night I communicated to the Speaker formally and in person, my definite refusal of the office of a Deputy Chairman. He was very gracious and complimentary. Oh my dear colleague, this is all about *me* ! yet I thought you would like to hear.'

'. . . By the way you will be glad to hear that Merivale has made a distinct success with "The Don." Curious that a man of Merivale's poetic instinct and gifts should only win Mar. 8, '88.

real success as a writer of screaming farce! Anyhow, I'm glad he has got the success, chiefly because it will make you glad. . . . I am writing this in the old familiar place and can hear all the time the strident tones of Lord Randolph Churchill who is orating about the condition of the British Army. . . .

'We did not got to Mrs. Jeune's party. The death of the German Emperor had been prematurely reported and was fully believed in London and of course the Prince and Princess could not go anywhere and we thought it probable that Mrs. Jeune would be glad if her other guests stayed away.'

Mar. 9, '88. '. . . The ceremonial, if it can be called by so grand a name, in the House concerning the death of the German Emperor was unworthy of the occasion. Very few men were in the House. W. H. Smith muttered and mumbled a few words of commonplace regret. Gladstone had not yet arrived and in his absence, Harcourt, who can do nothing well without preparation, muttered and mumbled some fewer words still—and then the performance was over. Gladstone came in just one moment too late. . . .'

Mar. '88. '. . . My refusal of the Deputy-Chairmanship has caused a good deal of talk in the House of Commons. Most people say I was right—men in sympathy with our party—T.P. thinks I ought to have taken it on the ground that it would have been a complete vindication of our party. But as Professor Stuart pointed out, the offer is in itself a complete vindication. William O'Brien thinks I was quite right. One reason Dr. Roose gave for my accepting it, is just the very strongest reason why I couldn't accept it—it would bring me within reasonable distance of a highly paid and a permanent office—that of Chairman of Committees. I couldn't allow myself to be brought within reasonable distance of paid office in political times like these. The five men are now appointed—no Irishman among them. . . .'

Mar. '88. '. . . I have just been to Bentley's and left our first volume. Your few words about the scenery in your last letter gave me a glad feeling of your getting better. I do so want you to come back fresh and fit (I suppose Mr. Bentley wouldn't let us put such a word into the mouth of our Princess). The proofs of "The Rebel Rose" will soon be coming in. I have kept back the last three chapters for your return. I shall so enjoy working with you again.'

'I wish you, dear colleague, many happy returns of the day. For this will reach you on your birthday and in the morning and so will perhaps be among the earliest birthday greetings and good wishes you have. Yes, I wish you many happy returns for your own sake and for the sake of those who look to you and love you. I know that you are not yourself a great lover of life—of life for the mere sake of life. Neither am I. One is not perhaps quite a fair and partial observer in such a winter as this—on such a drear and drenching day as this. But still I don't think I could honestly wish long years to anyone who had not some dearly loved kith and kin, and some made kith and kin by sympathy and affection. And so I do wish many happy returns of the day to *you*.' Upstairs Lobby, Mar. 26, '88.

To a literary 'old hand' like Justin McCarthy there must certainly have seemed something humorous in the inclusion with the proofs he received of 'The Rebel Rose' of the usual paper of press directions sent from publishing firms to young authors with their first proofs.

He writes in mild satire soon after my return from Switzerland:

'. . . I have received my formal instructions from our friend, young Mr. Bentley, and now I know that I must not write on both sides of the paper and have learned much else that is equally instructive! Also got a fresh bundle of proofs, as you have too, no doubt. I have not looked at mine yet and shall wait till I see you to-morrow. . . .

'I have to go to the Markets Commission at twelve in consequence of a letter from Lord Balfour of Burleigh who usually acts as Chairman of the Commission when Lord Derby is absent. I haven't the remotest idea to what it refers, but suppose there must have been some paragraph in the *Freeman* which looks as if it had been inspired by me—which it certainly was not. Anyhow I must go and put things right. Think of me with sympathy in my to-night's occupation—a dinner in Regent's Park and two parties in the West End. I shall be glad when they are over. . . . "Would it were bedtime and all well."'

April 3, '88. 'A little surprise was waiting for me last night, dear colleague. Parnell came to see me and, as I was not there, left the enclosed letter. Please keep it for me. I am to see him this afternoon. I have not the slightest idea of accepting the offer, although in the worldly and practical sense there is much to be said for it. It is the best unofficial position a man could have in Ireland.[1] But it would mean living in Ireland all the recess and going there very often during the session. But I must of course hear and consider all that Parnell has to say. It is a high compliment anyhow. I am anxious to talk it over with you to-morrow.'

Upstairs Lobby, April 9. 'I have sent off the proofs . . . but I have not had time to do a line of the second volume. It has been a regular House of Commons day for me. . . . Campbell asked me to come and dine at your house to meet a man who could tell me all about the brewers' question and the compensation clause —which I mean to take up, but I couldn't go. . . . So I am a little cross with fate and duty. Never mind! I must not grumble.

'One reason why I had to stay here was because we had a conference of Liberal members to settle what we are to do about the Local Government Bill. . . . We didn't get as far as the Compensation clauses.

'Don't be angry if this letter savours of Tolls and Market—I mean of politics. I shan't say a word of politics to-morrow—unless you ask me. Goodnight—and this will wish you good morning.'

Upstairs Lobby, April '88. 'I hope to see you to-morrow. . . . Of course you won't wait luncheon for me as I shall probably be a little late. We shall have some proofs to read, no doubt. . . . The business here to-night is very dull and won't give topic for a leader so I shall have to go down to the *Daily News* and see what chance may offer there. Last night for lack of a good parliamentary subject, I wrote a leader on Spanish bull-fights!

'. . . I have been to Roose. . . . He absolutely would not hear of the *Freeman* business. It was not so much the work he objects to but the incessant worry and unending, unlimited responsibility. He assured me it would only mean breaking down in six months at the most. . . . He tells me if I take care I have as good a chance of living a long life as

[1] An offer of the post of managing director of the *Freeman's Journal*.

anyone he knows—I don't know if there is anything particularly exhilarating in that prospect! . . . What a lot about myself. . . . And now I am going in for a regular turn of work at proofs. . . .'

'I shall call on you after three to-morrow. I only hope you will be able to see me. I shall have to be at the House by six because there is an important amendment of Gladstone's which we shall all have to vote on. It will, I fear, dispose of my Shakespearean dinner where I was to be the guest of Barnett Smith, but I can't miss Gladstone's amendment, for he is particularly anxious that the Irish members should rally in full force. I shall tell Parnell to-morrow my resolve about the Dublin business and of course Dr. Roose's reason. . . .' April 22, '88.

'. . . I haven't gone to my Shakespearean dinner-party, I couldn't leave the House as none could tell when the division would be taken. Gladstone made a splendid speech, magnificent in voice, magnificent in its advanced and advancing Radicalism. I have been in talk with various English Radical members through the evening, who are strongly of opinion that the Irish arrests and imprisonments are being taken too quietly and too much as a matter of course by the House of Commons and that something ought to be done to rouse up the attention of the English public—a great debate forced unexpectedly by the moving of the adjournment of the House to-morrow or Thursday. I think they are right. One of them, Professor Stuart, is in the closest relations with Gladstone and believes he can get Gladstone's consent, and what Gladstone assents to, Parnell will approve, but Parnell will not agree to anything of which Gladstone does not approve. I will tell you all about it to-morrow.' April 23, '88.

'I was so sorry and so disappointed that I could not get to see you this evening, but the truth was that in the absence of Parnell, I ran a great risk and moved the adjournment of the House on my own account (you remember the same thing being done in "The Right Honourable"?) to enable me to show up some horribly unconstitutional doings in Ireland. It might have been a dismal failure. It was a great success. It brought up the best and fiercest debate of the Session. It was supported by Gladstone, Harcourt, Trevelyan, Shaw, Lefevre and Sir Charles Russell. Gladstone made a most Upstairs Lobby, April 24, '88.

impassioned speech and said that the course I had taken would prove the death-blow of the course I had condemned. So of course I couldn't leave the House. . . . The Government majority was the smallest they ever had yet . . . forgive these awful politics ! . . .'

Upstairs Lobby, April 30.

'I was so disappointed that I couldn't get to you . . . but I couldn't. We had two or three Irish questions on in which our people take a deep interest and I had to stay. I am looking forward as a compensation for my devotion to the cause of public duty to seeing you to-morrow. I talked with Parnell to-night. I told him my determination concerning the *Freeman* and about Roose's opinion. He was very nice—declared he would never trouble me about the matter again—that he was very sorry I couldn't take the position—for all sorts of reasons—that he knew only too well from his own experience how a man has to limit his public services by mere consideration of what he can and what he can't do. So that is settled.'

May 3, '88.

'I enclose you a letter about "The Right Honourable" which has only just come from the wife of a Protestant Bishop in Illinois, U.S.A. It is enthusiastic but I believe sincere. What amuses me, however, and will perhaps amuse you still more, is the simple coolness with which she ignores your part ! Why are not *you* to have the wish that lies nearest your heart speedily fulfilled ? Why are there to be no prayers for *you* ? Now if it had been the Bishop who had read and liked the book, he, I daresay would have written to *you*.

'I have been to a luncheon-party at the house of some friends from New Brunswick—very nice people, a pair of young husbands and young wives. The father and mother of the young women were very kind to me in St. John's, New Brunswick. I propose to ask them to dinner at the House some evening and you and Campbell to meet them. They are anxious to see something of Parliament.'

Brighton, May, '88.

'I send you a chapter which I have just finished. If you can add a few touches to it, I shall be glad. Only don't be afraid of any discouraging criticisms. I have strong faith in the stimulating virtue of encouragement. . . .

'. . . The *Robert Macaire*[1] was a grim piece of tragic burlesque, very powerful in its way, but without the variety

[1] Produced by Sir Henry Irving at the Lyceum Theatre.

that Fechner used to put into it and without the magnificent flashes of lightning—if I may describe his style in that way. The weather has become lovely, and now I like Brighton. How odd to have to depend so much upon one's enjoyment of life on the weather and the atmosphere! I shall present myself in your drawing-room on Sunday with a face like burnished copper.

'I have been reading "Anna Karenina"—a marvellously powerful touching story—curiously poetic and realistic at once.

'The *Saturday Review* has not found out the secret,[1] for it gives us a long and on the whole a very good notice this morning, putting us at the head of the list of novels. It finds fault with the plot and with *Lady Saxon* as being too melodramatic: but it gives some high praise too. . . . If it had known the authorship there would probably have been a very different kind of notice.'[2]

'The Rebel Rose' had appeared in its garment of anonymity. It had a very good reception, and no one had taxed us with the authorship or had questioned its loyalty to the reigning house.

'What a pity that Mr. Bentley should have been so dreadfully cautious,' Mr. McCarthy writes, when commenting on the favourable reviews, one of which had said that the novel must be the work of a member of Parliament. I do not think, however, that the book lost by having been published anonymously. He writes concerning a new joint story:

'I enclose ten slips—they have, as you see, neither beginning or ending. . . . I wonder what you did last night. . . . I sat up and finished "Anna Karenina" and reduced myself by consequence to a condition of inevitable gloom, for of all the melancholy books, I think it takes a foremost place. . . . June 18, '88.

'Now I have to go to the House and I shall be there all the

[1] Referring to our novel *The Rebel Rose*.

[2] The *Saturday Review* was sternly opposed to Mr. McCarthy's political opinions.

evening. I am carrying with me a little budget of letters to be replied to and two huge petitions to be presented to the House from some of my constituents—one petition for closing public-houses on Sundays and another *against* it. And I have a whole bundle of papers about some local quarrel of National Societies in Derry which I am invited to compose. Think of me with sympathy.'

June 20. 'I am so glad that you liked my coffee-palace description. I thought of actually going to see a coffee-palace—I have never seen one, but there wasn't time and I resolved to trust to the depths of my moral consciousness from which to evolve the semblance of one. . . .

Upstairs Lobby, Friday midnight. 'Nothing much has happened to-day, dearest colleague. We are now debating the question of Disestablishment in Scotland—on which we hope to have a good division. Our great Irish debate opens on Monday. I had some talk with Parnell about it—and it will be curious to note whether time and events prove him right or not. His own judgment is *against* having such a debate, but he yields to Gladstone and the English Radicals. He says it only gives the Tories and the Unionists an opportunity of closing their ranks and displaying a great majority in the House once again. Let them alone—let them come into collisions among themselves—and let us stand by ready to strike in at the right moment—that is *his* policy. Of course the Irish public will like the great debate—and that is another reason why he yields. But his own judgment is *against* it. Well, we shall see. He is not often wrong.

'I shall call for you to-morrow as soon after half-past one as possible. I hope you will be able to come, and I *do* hope, ever so much, that I shall find you better. Good-night, or rather to you, when this will reach you—good-morning.

Affectionately Yours,

JUSTIN MCCARTHY.'

Upstairs Lobby, July 7. '. . . We have been consulting among ourselves and with all sorts of people as to the proper steps to be taken on the collapse of the O'Donnell action which has cut out any chance of our going into the witness-box. It was deliberate spite and malignity—a trick to injure us. Parnell and I made speeches in the House to-day, and I think the effect of Parnell's speech was very good. I merely told the true story of the £100

Upstairs Lobby
Friday - midnight.

Nothing much has happened to-day, dearest Colleague, we are now debating the question of Disestablishment in Scotland — on which we hope to have a good division. Our great Irish debate opens on Monday. I had some talk with Parnell about it — and it will be curious to note whether time & events prove him right or not. His own judgment is against having such a debate. But he yields to Gladstone, and the English Radicals. He says it only gives the Irish Unionists an opportunity of closing their ranks and

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Let them alone - let them
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I shall call for you
tomorrow ~~about~~ as soon after
half past one as possible. I
hope you will be able to come
and I do hope, ever so much,
that I shall find you better.
Good night - or rather to you,
when this will reach you - Good
morning.

Affectionately Yours
Justin M.c Carthy.

cheque to Frank Byrne and I am sure the House believed me. But the question is, what ought to be done next? John Morley is strongly of opinion that nothing more ought to be done. I am inclined to think we ought to press again for a committee of members of this House.

'I was at a luncheon-party to-day and had to rush away to get down here at half-past two in order to hear Parnell's speech and to make my own explanation. Lord Ashburnham likewise forsook his food and came with me.'

This year Miss Ada Rehan, the young American actress appearing in Shakespearean parts, was the theatrical sensation of the season. In a later letter, part of which I may insert here, Mr. McCarthy describes her performance in "Twelfth Night."

'Ada Rehan was exquisitely poetic—filled with a divine melancholy. It was not *Rosalind* in a different dress, it was quite a different woman. The grief for the supposed death of her brother shadowed her in every scene, line and glance. We went to her room when it was over. . . . Now again she has set the public aflame.'

I remember my first meeting her that July, at a supper Mr. McCarthy gave in the underground dining-room of the House of Commons, and the sight of her advancing between the compact rows of people which seemed to make an avenue up the Stranger's Lobby to the door leading still innerwards into the sacred Inner Lobby, whence we went down to the vault-like restaurant.

A tall girl wrapped in a cloak of curious make and colour —a combination of dove-grey and pink; above it, a head and face that in profile were like a cameo, but were not in the least classic when turned on one full. Pale, slightly haggard in repose, it was the face of the true actress, continually changing, with an oddly curved, expressive mouth —grave, tragic, mirthful by turn, and eyes, deep, intent, which could blaze like angry fires in *Katherine the Shrew*, but were

tender as the eyes of a gazelle when *Katherine* makes her submission to *Petruchio*. I think that, in her own style, Ada Rehan was the most impressive actress I have ever seen, excepting always Sarah Bernhardt. The House was up when the supper-party ended, and we heard the watchman's voice calling 'Who goes home,' after the custom of hundreds of years, as we passed through the solemn, inner courtyard and found Palace Yard dim and deserted. Another of the fantastic contrasts which make the strange fascination of St. Stephen's. Mr. McCarthy brings Miss Rehan into his House of Commons diary letter.

July '88. '. . . I dined with the Labouchères and some Americans in the House. The fair Ada had tea on the terrace. Parnell came also, and she was delighted—told him she would write home and make her mother happy by telling her she had talked with Parnell. . . . I have been very busy with a variety of business littlenesses and otherwise, for other people. To-morrow I am dining at Lord Rosebery's, and shall have to write my *Daily News* article in the day. What are you doing these coming days? Sunday, I lunch with you. . . . My days have fribbled away. I am weary of the Session and the Season. . . . Goodnight, dear colleague: it is midnight. . . .'

CHAPTER IX

MOSTLY THEATRICAL

All this time the controversy called 'Parnellism and Crime' was going on. Mr. Parnell had denounced the Pigott letter as a forgery in the House of Commons, but his denial had made no difference in the attacks. The Select Committee of Inquiry demanded by him had been twice refused by the Government, but in July 1888, the Special Commission of Judges was offered, and a Bill authorising this proceeding passed the House of Commons.

I find under date of July 9, 1888, some notes given me by Mr. McCarthy of a conversation he had had with Parnell on the question of rebutting *The Times*' allegations.

'Parnell came into the House. I was sitting next Sexton and was talking with him. We both agreed that something ought to be done but were quite not agreed what. Presently Parnell came and sat between us. He said in a manner that seemed excited for him. July 9, '88.

'"Don't you think we ought to do something about these attacks upon us? We can't have these attacks going on day after day without doing something."

'I said, "Certainly. That was the very thing we were talking of."

'Parnell said, "I have been thinking that the best thing is to move for the appointment of a committee of this House."

'I said, "Yes, I think it is the only thing to be done."

'Parnell said between his set teeth, "The trouble is that the whole Opposition Bench is against us."

'I said, "I think it is our affair much more than theirs. I think we had better do it whether they like it or not."

'T. P. O'Connor came and sat on a bench just below us. Questions were being put and answered all the time. T.P. leaned over to us and entered into the argument and was against doing anything without the approval of the Opposition bench. At last he suggested that Parnell should send a note by him to John Morley consulting him again on the subject. Parnell did so. I kept urging him to take his own course, whatever might happen. Sexton seemed to be of the same opinion but said little. Presently a note came back from John Morley saying:

'"We are all of opinion you had better do nothing further."

'Parnell seemed a little in doubt. "It is very hard," he said, "to act against the advice of all these men."

'Then I said, "Look here, Parnell, since when have we Irish members given our personal honour into the keeping of any Englishman, however kindly and well-disposed?"

'Parnell stopped for a moment and then said, "Yes, I think you are right."

'He and Bradlaugh and Lawson rose together. The Speaker first called Bradlaugh who put some question of his own and then Parnell and Lawson rose together. Lawson was between the Speaker and Parnell, so Lawson was called.

'Parnell muttered "Damn!" For the calling of Lawson had spoiled his chance.'

At this time, and in relation to the allegations of *The Times* and the Committee of Inquiry, about the necessity for which Mr. McCarthy felt deeply, he writes:

July '88. '. . . We had a great debate in the House to-day, and I like the look of things better than I did. Don't fear about the enquiry. We shall have it to the full—to the deep—one way or the other. *The Times* says they never made any charge against *me* about murder. I hope to prove to the House to-morrow that they did. . . . I enclose you a letter which will amuse you, from Stephen M——. I wonder if you

remember him—a mummer who came to see us in New York and recited some of Praed's poems ? . . .'

A scrap of talk with the late Duke of Teck, at a men's dinner-party of which my colleague tells me, sheds a pleasant gleam of light upon the courteous relations of the late King Edward, then Prince of Wales, with those in his immediate service.

'The Duke was complaining at being put into formal functions—the sort of thing he disliked. "What I like," he said, "is to have a little dinner-party of men, just such as we have here, but I hardly ever get the chance. . . . The Prince of Wales often lectures me and tells me what a man in my position ought to do and ought not to do. He says one never ought to lose one's temper, even with a servant, and I do lose my temper sometimes" the Duke added, whimsically.

'"And does the Prince of Wales never lose his temper ?"

'"No," answered the Duke, "I don't believe he ever does ; and that's why he lectures me."'

'The weather is dreadful. I wonder if you will get to your dinner-party to-night. I am going to two parties—one to meet Gladstone. Miss Ada Rehan came to lunch and we had a long talk—I wish you had been there.—She is very bright and clever and charming. July 20, '88.

'I have not begun my "Thirty Years" yet. I have not felt up to the mark of beginning anything. The cruel depression of the weather and everlasting rain takes the energy out of one. . . .'

'I leave town on Saturday for Paris, and shall be away a little more than a week. I am tired of London, for the moment anyhow. . . . Aug. 30, '88.

'I have been reading "The Woman in White" over again, likewise Macaulay's "Essays" : likewise Sir William Temple's "Essays," and my friend Sydney Buxton's new book "Finance and Politics" on which I am going to write an article in the *Contemporary Review*. Rather miscellaneous reading !'

'The weather here is very fine and warm. . . . Mrs. Crawford (*Daily News* Correspondent) has just called on us and sat a long time. We are going out to her little country place on Sunday, returning here in the evening. Grand Hotel, Paris, Sept. 4, '88.

'I will get you the plays you want. Sardou was at the first performance (of the Daly Company in "As You Like It") last night. There was a great house—literally packed—but the French critics don't like Shakespeare: never did understand him and never could.—So the *critiques* are nearly all about the play itself, and rather in compassion of the artists who have to perform in such a piece! Ada Rehan was dreadfully depressed last night when she came home (she is staying here)—after all was done. *I* thought the audience very enthusiastic—but she didn't, she was almost tearful, said she played very badly and was altogether cast down—said it was partly *my* fault because she had sat up too late the night before reading "Maid of Athens." Was not that nice?'

Paris, Sept. 5, '88.

'Everything goes on here in very much the same way every day. We see a great deal of Miss Rehan and the Drews. We met Whistler this morning returning from his honeymoon trip. . . . We drive a good deal, and Huntly and I wander over the old parts of Paris—and we go to the theatre—and sit in the courtyard here with Miss Rehan and Mrs. Gilbert when they come back from their play. They have a new piece to-night, "Nancy and Co.," and we are going there. I have just seen Miss Rehan and she is fearfully nervous about it. Dear colleague, other branches of art have their troubles as well as ours, and even very brilliant success, such as *hers*, seems to bring with it no sense of security, but only an ever-recurring anxiety and fret. . . .

'I am greatly interested and charmed by her personality and, artistically, I study her. It is a peculiar nature—child-like—a child of genius, wayward, sweet, no coquetry, but a love of being liked and petted and hearing nice things said—as a child likes to go round the room and be petted in turn by all the company. I cannot as yet find the queenliness of the actress come out in the woman: but, on the other hand, I can't find a trace—even the lightest—of petulance or unkindness, or temper. There is a sweet frivolity with an almost tragic sensitiveness and proneness to despondency.

'Every night here, when the play is over, we sit in the courtyard with Ada Rehan and the Drews and various others and talk until one o'clock. Goodbye for to-day.

'I have had a letter this morning from George Lewis bidding me to a consultation next week about the Parnell

case, and asking me if I can give him a collection of my speeches. Needless to say that I never kept a line of any speech of mine, or thought it worth keeping.

'We saw "The Railroad of Love" last night. The acting was brilliant and Daly's dialogue is I think positively better than Pinero's. It is short, sharp, sparkling, to the point—altogether admirable. . . . But the Londoners here don't like the absence of *feux d'artifice* at the end of each act, and Daly and Miss Rehan detest the artificial blaze-up of forced situations. "I want to carry my audience by my acting," she says.

'We had our usual gathering in the courtyard last night and the child of genius was in bright form. . . . I send you Bourget's novel and some of Sardou's plays.

'I have got lots of notions for scraps of "copy"—but reserve them until I see you. I hear nothing of politics. I actually don't read the newspapers.'

'. . . Augustin Daly gave us a little dinner yesterday at the *Maison d'Or*. Mrs. Gilbert and Miss Rehan were there. I told Miss Rehan that you had called her "the divine Ada," and you have no idea how delighted she was. She said she had heard Sara Bernhardt and Patti called by that name, and that at one time her wildest dreams hardly went so far for herself, and that she had never been called so before. . . . She talks very well and has read a good deal. She is not witty, but she is never *banale* as most actresses are. . . .' Paris, Sept. 7, '88.

'The Daly Company went off to-day. . . . The camp is all broken up. It was very interesting. I studied life from the "upper boxes" point of view. Do you understand my "upper boxes" point of view? I have developed it in "Linley Rochford"' Paris, Sept. '88.

'I have just returned home and am sorry I can't go to see you, but had engaged to dine with some people at Prevatali's, and there would be no time. I am so sorry you are under the visitation of the British Workman. I had a very pleasant time at Dunrozel with Lady Russell and her daughter. A simpler sweeter pair of women you could not easily find: very well read in literature: of course great politicians with a keen sympathetic interest in everything: very easily amused and so simple and kindly. We had some long walks in the day, up heath-covered hills and by narrow gorges, reminding Cheyne Gardens, Sept. '88.

one of the Lowlands of Scotland. Then they are devoted Irish Nationalists and there is something refreshing in hearing other than London Tory views of the Irish question. . . .

'Did you notice that singular story of the woman who tried to identify one of the poor creatures murdered by Jack the Ripper ?—the story of the woman, who, on the very night of the murder, thought she felt her lost sister kissing her three times as she lay in bed : and because of this, when she heard of the murders, made sure that one of the victims was her sister and believes it still. She appears to be mistaken about the identity but that does not alter the singular nature of the story.'

Sept. 25, '88. 'The enclosed will amuse, surprise and interest you, dear Colleague. I have written to Harpers and Osgoods asking them to keep our secret. Is it not odd that we should be found out so soon ? . . .[1]

About this time I had got myself further entangled in the theatrical mesh, and had been advised to secure the dramatic copyright of 'The Ladies' Gallery' by having an acting verson of the story performed prior to publication of the book. This was done by some of the pupils in Miss Sarah Thorne's school for the drama at Margate. Mr. McCarthy, though not a partner in my theatrical ventures, was as much interested in them as though he had been. He writes to me on October 2, 1888 :

'I felt ever so sympathetically about you last night. You seemed overtaxed yet holding up well against the various literary, dramatic, house-arranging and all the other distractions and troubles. I kept wishing you had not to go to Margate and wishing you were not burthened with this play—and so on and to little purpose. Well, I hope you will have some success out of this business.'

Again a week later :

'The whole McCarthy family are going to rally in Margate on Saturday. Will you kindly take rooms for us ? And will

[1] Referring to our authorship of *The Rebel Rose* and its discovery in America.

you arrange about a box or stalls—whatever you think best. Is there a bill of the Play out yet ? and, if there is, will you send me one ? I am anxious to hear how you get on. . . .

' Here it is dismal. A man just come into a large property could not help feeling depressed if he were a man with my mimosa-like temperament, which contracts and shrivels and shudders under chilly rains and grey grim skies.

' You have my thoughts and sympathy in your somewhat trying campaign in the provincial drama. . . . '

' Miss Lamb's fear of an unlucky touch burlesquing the whole thing I accept as a good omen. Do you know why ? A great parliamentary orator once laid down as a law that no man ever really delivered a great piece of oratory unless he had the courage to run the risk of appearing ridiculous. Oct. 4, '88.

' I have been writing a late leader. I am waiting for the proof—and it is past one o'clock. . . .

' Did you see that Mr. Barlow's poem got a splendid review in to-day's *Daily Telegraph* acclaiming him as a poet of a very high order ? I am very glad.' [1]

The whole McCarthy family, as well as Mr. ' Joe ' Knight, the dramatic critic, one or two other press gentlemen and a few private friends did rally loyally round us for that copyright performance—of which the most entertaining part was the supper my husband and I gave to actors, critics, and friends at the York Hotel afterwards. Miss Thorne's pupils, as well as my leading lady, Miss Beatrice Lamb—who, later on, scored a London success in ' Niobe,' did their very best with a crude patched-up piece of work. Miss Violet Vanbrugh, who played ' Number Two Heroine,' must now, in her celebrity, smile at the remembrance of that occasion. Fortunately, nothing but the copyright hung on the production, and so we could all take it as a huge joke. It really was an excessively funny experience from the first rehearsal to the end. The leading-lady was staying with me at the hotel, her bedroom being over our sitting-room ;

[1] Mr. George Barlow, author of *The Pageant of Life*, and other poems,

and, in the off-times from the theatre when she retired to perfect herself in her part, we would be startled by the sound of tragic declamation overhead, and then of a heavy fall, when the heroine was required to faint at the 'curtain' of the third act. I would run up distressed lest Miss Lamb should really have hurt herself, but there was no moderating her passion for realism. She would always pick herself up and begin the declamatory prelude, winding up with the fall, over again. One of the critics present at that Margate performance recommended the play to Mr. and Mrs. Kendal; and after working at it with Mrs. Kendal it was produced by them on trial in the provinces, but was not enough of a success to be seen on the London stage. I was very glad and so was Mr. McCarthy, for by that time I had discovered—and he for me—that the trade of dramatic author was far too nerve-racking a business to suit me. I never regretted the Margate adventure, however, for besides the friendship with Mrs. Kendal which has lasted ever since, it brought me into touch with the delightful Vanbrugh (-Barnes) family not only in the person of Violet, now Mrs. Arthur Bourchier, but of her sister Angela—Mrs. Mallaby—whose violin-playing, later on, when she occasionally stayed with us in our Hertfordshire home, was to me an especial joy.

There is something ghostly in chronicling failures and successes of the past that have faded off the canvas and were in truth never worth recording. Yet I have refrained from scoring out Mr. McCarthy's references to them, since they serve to illustrate the generous sympathy always at his literary colleague's command.

Oct. '88. 'I have had another letter from George Lewis and must go to see him either Monday or Tuesday. *The Times* have got hold of a notion that I have in my possession some mysterious books or documents of the National League, and I am called upon to make an affidavit about them and to produce them.

Of course I never had a book or document of any kind in my possession. I was for some years the president and the books and documents were kept in the care of the paid secretary, who is at his post and quite willing to produce all he has. Still this does not satisfy *The Times* people who seem to have gone idiotic over this affair.'

'I wonder if you can read this pallid scroll, dear colleague? By the way "pallid scroll" sounds fine, does it not? Could it not be worked somehow into certain powerful and highly-wrought passages!' Oct. 5, '88.

'To-day I met Lady Dilke who tells me that Sir Charles is to come in again with flying colours as member for Chelsea! I really fancy she believes it! Meanwhile he and she are starting to-morrow on a journey to *Afghanistan*! of which she spoke as composedly as I might if I were telling you that to-morrow I am taking a journey to Margate. Oct. 8.

'. . . To-day we went to see Dante Rossetti's grave. It is beautifully placed in a quiet old churchyard not wholly unlike that at Battersea with a memorial cross designed by his old friend and mine, Ford Madox Brown, the founder of the Pre-Raphaelite school of Art. We had a long dreary journey home.'

'The dinner-party at the O'Connors' was very pleasant. . . . Young Phelps was there and an American millionaire, and Mrs. O'Connor's bright little Texan friend, and Leslie Ward the artist of *Vanity Fair* and a great German violinist[1] who I am told played divinely, later, but I had to go to the *Daily News* and so missed the violin-playing, for which I was sorry, for I adore the violin. Oct. 27, '88.

'. . . I have been taking a long solitary walk in the Battersea region—a sort of ghost-walk revisiting the glimpses of the moon—you know the kind of thing and you know my predilections—and now I am going to study "Vittoria Accoromboni!"'

'This day must be against you: it is so heavy and wet. The very heavens seem to be dissolving in rain and the gloom out of doors is something that passes description. . . . I wrote on Cardinal Newman last night, but I am glad to say he did not die after all.'[2] Nov. 2, '88.

[1] Herr Johannes Wolff.

[2] An obituary notice, the death of the Cardinal appearing to be imminent.

Upstairs Lobby, Nov. '88.

'We have had some exciting scenes here this evening. The subordinates of the Irish Executive have led them into fearful trouble—you will see it all in the papers. It is good for us but very bad for them. I shall be anxious to hear from you in the morning and to know what Sir Morell Mackenzie said and what you are to do. Tell me if I may come and see you, but I don't suppose you will be allowed to leave your room. I shall soon be expecting Campbell's telegram. Parnell has had a very important motion on and he was powerfully supported by Gladstone. We had a very good division—38 majority against us. . . . I have been thinking much of you—wishing you had as much strength as spirit—thinking what good comrades we are—you and I—how glad I am to be with you, and how thoroughly I want you to understand that you are only to see me when you want, and when you are free. It is so much for me to know that you are *there*!'

He writes when I am convalescing in Kent:

Cheyne Gardens, Dec. 4, '88.

'Gladly would I have taken the train to-day and gone to see you but I am literally chained to London. I have an important question concerning the Derry voters to raise in the House at half-past three. I have to go down to the East End to speak at a Liberal meeting at seven and then I have to get back to the House as fast as I can for there will be some very important divisions. One gets so weary of it all sometimes. To-morrow however I mean to go to Ramsgate. I shall have to come up on Thursday evening for it is my *Daily News* day and there will be Irish business in the House, but I will go down again on Saturday and could stay over Tuesday. I can quite understand how you feel the oppression of a life of enforced indoors. . . . If I do not hear from you to the contrary I shall go to-morrow. I cannot I fear go earlier than the three fifteen train. I shall write to Campbell to ask him if he is going, but I shall go in any case if you remain. I hope you will remain.'

We were staying at Margate just then. December at Margate brings no balmy suggestion, yet there was a curious, dream-like sense of exhilaration in the biting wind blowing

straight from utmost northern waters. There seems always to have been an association with Justin McCarthy in my winter visits to the Isle of Thanet. I find some notes of an excursion with him to Birchington to see Dante Rossetti's grave, when I felt the first touch of a certain eerie fascination, that deepened with later familiarity, which in my mind hangs over that bit of Kentish coast—the long stretches of grassy land, greyish-brown, tinging to yellow in the winter season, almost treeless and apparently level with the horizon, only a solitary farmhouse or windmill or hayrick standing here and there silhouetted in dull grey against fainter-hued grey sky. Grey is the predominant note of that wintry landscape—grey earth, grey heaven, and grey sea blending in the dull grey mist.

As we entered the church gates, an old sexton who was rolling the gravel walk came up and asked us if we were looking for the tomb of that gentleman as died at Birchington whose grave so many people came to see. He took us to the spot. The headstones in the churchyard were grey, too, and pallidly grey was the granite cross designed by Ford Madox Brown to mark the last resting-place of his friend.

We stood there for a long time while Mr. McCarthy talked of the dead poet-painter, and then we went into the church to see the memorial window.

'There's not another bit of glass in the church to compare with that un,' said the sexton, proudly, 'and the left-hand side is after one of the gentleman's own pictures. 'Twere Grills Matheson and Grind of Birmingham as put it up, and I helped un myself,' added the sexton.

Mr. McCarthy smiled and quoted from Byron:

> '. . . They come to pay
> Homage to him, to myself—whatever
> Your honour pleases.'

'Rossetti was a frank atheist,' he went on, 'yet see—he has come to the consecrated ground and the cross and the memorial window!' [1]

In December 1888 Mr. McCarthy and his family went rather suddenly to Algiers, and his next letters were written from that place. I got to know Algiers very well myself afterwards, but now all his descriptions of it were new to me.

Algiers, Dec. 22, '88.

'I got here last night. This hotel is a long way at the back of the town and on the crest of a beautifully wooded hill. It is a lovely place. The sea, the sky, the white amphitheatre of town, the wreath of wooding, the palms, the oranges, the cedar, the cactus, the cypress, the dear old pepper trees, the mosques, the crowds of Arabs in white burnouses, the Arab women with the yashmaks over their faces—it all carried me back to my Egyptian winter just before I first saw you.

'Will you tell Campbell that my three stalls for the first night of *Macbeth* at the Lyceum are at his disposal. Of course I know that you would not be able to venture out.'

Christmas Day, '88.

'I shall silently drink to your health to-day, dear colleague. If you were here, the weather, I think, would soon make you well. I have been here four days and feel like an old inhabitant of the place. Except for the Arab town and one or two places belonging in old time to the Deys, there is nothing to be seen—I mean in the way of sights. In the European suburb, there is no promenade, no drives, no common meeting-place, no amusement. It is just like a suburban villa quarter in an English town only that the villas are mostly of Moorish build and that they stand among palms and oranges and aloes, cactus and olive. For enjoyment you have the sea, the sky, the hills and lanes.

'There is an English society here and people call on you. I have made several calls already and I am now going to a luncheon-party. I met a Miss R—— to-day—such a graceful sweet and dignified old maid of about fifty, whom I have not seen since I saw her a graceful sweet and charming young

[1] Touching this passage, which I leave as it was uttered, Miss McCarthy writes me: 'I don't think Dante Rossetti was ever an atheist—I have never found anything in his poems saying so. My father never met Dante Rossetti. W. M. Rossetti he knew.'

bridesmaid on my own wedding-day thirty odd years ago. She lives here altogether.

'I have some disagreeable news about the Irish Exhibition. I am afraid the Executive Council are personally liable for the debts of the Exhibition: although I, like others, only joined the Council on the assurance that we were incurring no pecuniary liability whatever. It seems however that we are liable and we have all been served with writs. . . . I think it is a little hard when one only tried to lend a helping hand to beneficent enterprise. However I shan't take it much to heart whatever comes. Things of that kind don't greatly trouble me. Now tell me all about yourself. That is the news from London I most want to get.'

'The old part of the town is very interesting and picturesque, intensely Eastern. But I miss the camels. There are none in the city, and I think it is about the first business of an Eastern city to have strings of camels in the streets! Have you had a circular from Tillotson about German translations of your future books. I have, and have given him my full authority to bestow on the Germans the inestimable blessing of a German translation of any stories I may hereafter write. I shan't be a loser no matter how little I get, for several of my former stories were translated and published in Germany, and I don't believe I ever got anything. I am working at my one volume story and I don't like it. . . . Dec. 27, '88.

'Tell me about the new house. Tell me of anything that interests you—it is sure to interest me. . . . I am sorry to see that Laurence Oliphant is dead.'

'Just got your welcome letter and I send you a few lines before the post is closed. It is a very irregular post and I was beginning to think that a letter from you must have gone astray: and indeed its date shews me that it ought to have reached me before this. Never mind, since it has come safely after all. I am so glad you liked the Shakespeare. Of course if you wish it I will let you know what it cost when I get back—for it would not be worth your while to send me the few shillings out here. I rejoice that you are settled in your own house. I wish from my very heart a Happy New Year to the best colleague and friend a man could have.' Dec. 29.

CHAPTER X

FROM AFRICA TO ST. STEPHEN'S

The close of 1888 and the beginning of 1889 see Mr. McCarthy in Algiers, and he sends me bits of description of the town and its surrounding scenery. Here is the view of Algiers itself:

'A vast amphitheatre of earth, red where the soil makes itself visible—with red bluffs rising up here and there above the trees—red bluffs with rare streaks of white and yellow. Up to these bluffs, the ground rises in long rolling hills and plateaux and natural terraces, all covered with trees and plants and gardens. Villas, with white walls and mostly red-tile roofs—even when roofs are flat. Hills grown with trees and vegetation so as to seem like one vast shrubbery. A great sweep of sea, the bay expanding east and west: at the east end, the city, all sparkling white houses and domes of mosques and spires of churches, the modern French city below: the old town rising above: the great citadel above all. Across the western arm of the bay, the Atlas mountains looking something like a range of Alps seen from Berne, but not so bold. Snow on the farther ranges.

'The sea stretches out in curious zones of different colours—here, the familiar, deep Mediterranean blue: there, a zone of intense emerald green: then a streak of warm reddish brown: far out, a delicate opal grey whitening into silver: inshore, a fringe of sparkling foam adown the whole stretch of the bay. Ships, steamers, boats with latteen sails. . . .'

And here is another impression-sketch:

'A little village occupies the basin of a small valley quite

begirt with hills and every hill covered with trees. Small as the village is, its public *Place* has room for rows and double rows of trees—pepper trees, olive, orange, date, palm, pine. A Catholic church : and *École Communale* from which bursts a crowd of noisy little boys in odious contrast with the almost absolute silence of the *Place* otherwise : an old, seemingly decayed mosque with its place of ablution outside and not within its precincts : a public building which contains post-office and *Conseil*, and five or six *cafés*—these make up the village.—Yes, there is also a bakery.

'One does not see any private dwelling-house. There is no one visible when we come in first, save for a few Arabs squatted and chatting in low tones and a man on the roof of a house who does not seem to be doing anything in particular there. The tree-covered hills seem to be the walls of the theatre on whose stage is this toy village and its roof is the blue sky.'

He writes to me on the first day of 1889 :

'This is the first time I have written the name of the New Year. I open the year with this letter to you and with such wishes for your happiness as I need not write, for you will know them just as well unwritten. Algiers, Jan. 1, '89.

'The days go by in the usual way here, except that we have had some tremendous rainstorms lately, but as a rule the weather is sunny and delightful, the colour of the sea and sky entrancing, and the wooded hills and lanes tempt one to perpetual walking. I have been wishing every day that you were here, thinking what walks we would have and what notes we could make for future "copy"—notes of skies and woods and many-coloured seas and of mosques and narrow Arab streets, climbing up by successive flights of steps almost to the skies—and so on. But I am glad you are not here to-day—and I am glad you were not here yesterday. Such rain-storms ! As bad as in Syria in the rainy season. The wood fires won't burn ; the windows are driven open by the wind : the roofs won't keep out the rain. My bedroom where I am writing this is only one storey up, yet the rain is dripping down through the ceiling into two places, having filtered thus far through other and higher up ceilings. So I am glad you are not here to-day. But to-morrow will probably be a divine day, and then I shall wish you were here ! '

Algiers, Jan. '89.

'. . . Our rainstorms continue and one can hardly get out. The climate is too changeable for a satisfactory winter resort—not to be compared to Egypt in that way, but of course much better than any part of the Riviera, for there is never any mistral, and when it is fine, it is simply a delightful summer. I am better except for a cold: it is very hard to escape colds at this time of year: the changes are very sudden. We sometimes have in one day a perfectly divine early part—up to three o'clock, and then a chill cold evening and a night of rain in very torrents. . . .'

Jan. 23, '89.

'Life goes on here in a very quiet monotonous way. I walk, read, make notes, talk to people. There are some nice people in the hotel—the Flowers of Stratford on Avon, two or three bright young men—an Englishman: an American: an Austrian: Miss Rhoda Broughton—I have talked to her a little: she is a most accomplished woman: I like her much. General Clive—Mrs. Houston's friend, you remember? has just come to Algiers. I am to meet him at a luncheon-party to-morrow.

'. . . We only got news of the Govan election to-day, and you may know that I am exulting—but may not show my exultation by outward sign, for all the English here are Tories or Liberal-Unionists. So I confide in the sympathètic breasts of the young American and Austrian. I have got De Pressande's book on the Irish question. It is most interesting, and must do good on the continent.

'Have you read an American novel called "John Ward, Preacher"? It is painful but very clever. I like it on the whole better than "Robert Elsmere." Nothing here except that P. F. has arrived. You know P. F.?—Retired diplomatist—faded man about town—withered, frisky, elderly—more than elderly—"masher." . . .

'I have just had a most delightful drive through winding roads and by the sea with a very nice American woman, whose husband has taken a pretty Mauresque villa here for the winter. The sunset was divine, and then in the opal skies, the planet Venus beamed out like a miniature moon. It was sweet and sad and lovely. I felt steeped in the beauty of it all and touched with a curious pathos which one couldn't explain.

'I have been reading "With the Immortals" by Marion Crawford. It is fantastic and the dialogue is badly done—

utterly uncharacteristic—but it interested me, and I am in sympathy with the intense admiration of Julius Caesar.'

'. . . I was so glad to get a good long letter from you— all the more, because it told me you are beginning to settle down in your new house. I feel with you that it is terribly trying to have to surrender one's artistic ideas and accept something stupid and commonplace. I shall be glad if you are able to go to Monte Carlo : it will do you much good. Jan. 29, '89.

'Yes, we shall have a talk over my affairs when I get back : it is of no use trying to write about them. I was talking yesterday to Lord Ronald Gower who came straight from London, and he has not heard anything new. Anyhow, it cannot do *me* much harm. The empty traveller, according to Juvenal, may sing before the robber !—not that I mean to liken the creditors of the Irish Exhibition to robbers by any means. . . .

'I expect to leave here towards the end of next week. . . . I am anxious to get back foi various reasons. This place and the conditions of our life here have made a curious impression on me. I feel as I have grown ever so much older during these few weeks.

'Did Mrs. Francillon send you a copy of her Jacobite song dedicated "By Gracious Permission to Her Royal Highness Princess Louis of Bavaria, Heiress of the House of Stuart" ? She has just sent me a copy, which I take to be evidence that she has made some guess as to the authorship of "The Rebel Rose." Of course it does not matter much now who knows it. The song is audaciously Jacobite and would make Mr. Bentley's hair stand on end ! '

'I am sorry to hear of poor Pfeiffer's death—still more of Pellegrini's—more still of my old friend Franz Hueffer's. Did you know him ? he was musical critic of *The Times* and a son-in-law of Madox Brown. I have heard of so many deaths in the few weeks since I left England. . . .' Jan. 31, '89.

'. . . We have to put off departure, for we are weather-bound—storm-bound. It is blowing a genuine hurricane to-day and the rain streaming in positively blinding torrents. It is doubtful if the steamer will leave the harbour. As things are, I must stay, at which I chafe a good deal. I am tired of this place despite the singular beauty of the scenery—tired of the rains and tempests. Our landlord—a dry little Feb. 6, '89.

Italian—assures me that next season will be delightful. It may be—so far as I am concerned ! . . . I have been making a few short excursions to a Kabyle village, a Trappist monastery, etc. On Sunday we saw the most interesting and beautiful religious ceremony I ever witnessed—the service for the dead who have perished at sea and whose bodies have not been recovered from the waves. The service is in the open air on an altar which stands upon a great hill overlooking the sea. It was a picture—a poem.'

Mr. McCarthy sent me some notes of this service and the church where it is held : and I may perhaps insert them here.

'Notre Dame d'Afrique is a Moorish looking church like a mosque perched on the top of a rocky and wooded hill overlooking the sea. In front of the principal entrance to the church is a plateau with a small parapet, and beneath, the ground descends in terrace after terrace of white-walled red-roofed, bare villas and small houses in gardens and fields, to the sea. From the *Place* in front of the church if one does not go near the parapet, one can only see the sea, not the descending slopes of terrace. The church perched on the hill seems then to have a sheer descent to the Mediterranean. A stone altar with a cross stands on the very edge of the plateau. It is dedicated to all those who have perished in the sea and whose bodies the waves have not given up.

'Now a procession is formed of priests and acolytes in robes of red, black and white swinging brass censers, and a burial service is solemnly performed over all those unseen and nameless dead.

'A grey sky, a grey sea, the evening sun sinking slowly on the hills and on the water—the praying and the chanting : the music directed at the sea—sent flowing over the sea, and the priests sprinkling their drops of Holy Water to mingle as it were with the spray of the Mediterranean. Nothing could well be more touching, more pathetic, more instinct with the companionship of the living and the dead. The very greyness of sea and sky seemed more suitable to such a ceremony than a bright blue heaven and the sea lustrous with its zones of various tints. It made the scene itself join in the poetic melancholy of that burial service.

'What a sad story that is about the Austrian Crown Prince. Suicide certainly—but enforced suicide, some people say. It seems a long time since we talked together. I begin to feel like a prisoner here. I *will* break bounds to-morrow. Meanwhile my thoughts are unrestrained by weather, and I send them across the sea to you.'

Shortly before Mr. McCarthy's return to London, the long drawn-out attack of *The Times* on Mr. Parnell came to a dramatic culmination. No need to recapitulate the story of how Pigott, the author of the forged letters, broke down under Sir Charles Russell's cross-examination: how he made his confession to Mr. Labouchere who had it witnessed by Mr. George Augustus Sala: then how Pigott fled to Spain and there committed suicide. Mr. McCarthy writes triumphantly:

Tuesday Night, London, Feb. '89.

'I must pour out my exultation over the utter smash of *The Times* case. Was there ever such a catastrophe of such a plot? It almost seems like a judgment of Providence. I have just come from the House. I didn't wait to the end. No one there is talking of any but the one subject. Sir W. Harcourt came to me to urge me to prevail on Parnell to speak in the debate late on Thursday evening, just before the division and when the House is crammed. He says Parnell will get such a reception as no man ever got before in the House of Commons, and that the mere fact of such a reception will tell powerfully on the country. Of course I will urge it on Parnell but I shan't tell him anything about the intended demonstration, if I did it might only make him shrink from appearing. I saw him this evening. He thinks Pigott's disappearance a great misfortune for us as it may prevent our having the whole case out. I mentioned this view to Sir William Harcourt, but he said he took quite another idea. He says the English will want nothing more after the flight of Pigott. That, for them will prove the whole case. I am inclined to agree with Harcourt. What a strange love for wanton lying the wretched Pigott seems to have had. To-day Mr. Soames, the *Times* man, deposed in court that Pigott told him he had had a very important interview with me—with me, only fancy!—in a

house in Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, in October last. I never saw the man in all my life and of course in last October I would not have gone near him. Sir Charles Russell and Lockwood came to me this evening in the House of Commons to tell me of this. Of course they were satisfied when I told them I had never seen the wretch. What could he have hoped to gain by such a statement as that ? '

Upstairs Lobby, Feb. '89. '. . . The old familiar place ! . . . Gladstone is in great form. There is much excitement here about the Pigott breakdown to-day. " Worth a hundred seats to us," one of the Liberal members said to me. " What a day of confusion for your enemies ! " Childers said to me just now in positive triumph.'

Feb. '89. '. . . I had a talk with Parnell to-night. He is, of course, very happy about the breakdown of *The Times*, but takes it with magnanimity and speaks only with pity of the degraded wretch Pigott. Everyone here is talking of the case. It is a bitter business for the Government. " Two ghastly days for us " Sir Henry James says, who is one of the counsel for *The Times*. . . .

' I am very hoarse—a pleasing preparation for to-morrow's meeting, but I don't care, seeing that the plot of *The Times* has come to shame. I am going down to the country and fear I shall not be able, owing to the difficulties about Sunday trains, to get back before Monday.

' I saw Hathaway's agent to-day, and have decided to go to the States in the Fall, and have told him I should like to go to California. He thinks I should do well there in the winter and should thus escape the cold weather. . . .'

Feb. 26. ' I almost fear to tempt you, but I have a place in the House for you on Friday, and Gladstone opens the debate. If you can go, be at the Gallery door by three. Of course we will dine at the House. . . .'

And of course I was at the Ladies' Gallery door by 3 o'clock, and I stayed in the House until after the great event had taken place. For that evening of March 1, 1889, was the historic occasion of Mr. Parnell's ovation in the House of Commons, when he spoke for the first time after the suicide

of Pigott and the utter breakdown of *The Times*' charges founded on the famous forged letter. When Mr. Parnell rose about 11, after Mr. Gladstone's speech, the whole Opposition—including Mr. Gladstone, Sir William Harcourt, and most of those on the front Opposition bench as also many Tory members—stood up bare-headed and cheered the Irish leader for several minutes. Well do I remember the dramatic scene upon which I looked down from behind the grating of the Ladies' Gallery—the sea of faces and of waving hats, and I, too, felt to the quick the surge of excitement which swept the House at sight of that tall form in loosely-built clothes and the pale brown-bearded, statuesque face, as the man who was called 'The Uncrowned King' waited until the storm of cheers had died down, cold, and apparently unmoved by this spontaneous and wildly enthusiastic exhibition of the British love of fair play.

But to me, the most thrilling thing of the evening was Mr. Gladstone's speech. I had heard him speak before, fairly often, but never with so much power and feeling—I did not hear him on the occasions when he brought in his two Home-Rule bills, nor upon the very last time that he addressed the House, when his farewell to that field of his triumphs and defeats was a prophetic call to his country—strangely prophetic, remembered in present political conditions—to limit the power of the House of Lords.

To-night it was an arraignment of the Crimes Bill and of the action of the Government towards the Irish members. I cannot refrain from quoting two or three sentences from that memorable speech.

In recognition of, I conclude, some technical arrangement, the opening words were:

[1] 'My first duty, Sir, is to thank the honourable member

[1] From the report in *The Times*.

for Longford (Mr. Justin McCarthy) for his great courtesy in affording me an opportunity of addressing the House at this time, which I should not otherwise have enjoyed. . . .'

Then:

'I do not know whether the House recollects how this subject[1] was handled in sarcastic verse by Lord Byron when Mr. Hobhouse was sent to prison. Lord Byron wrote:

'"Let Parliament send you to Newgate,
Newgate will send you to Parliament."'

And again:

'To us, sir, it matters not who is to lead. The strength lies not in the leader but in the cause.'

The impression of Mr. Gladstone that night is an ineffaceable one—the commanding form, the play of feature upon the fine, clear-cut face, pale too, but mobile with feeling, the flash of those eagle eyes, as, with head tilted slightly backward and arm outstretched in the well-known oratorical gesture, he delivered the peroration of his speech. It seemed the inspired prophet who spoke these final words:

'. . . You may deprive of its grace and of its freedom the act which you are asked to do. But avert that act you cannot. To prevent the consummation is utterly beyond your power. It seems to approach at an accelerated rate—come it slower or come it quicker, surely it is coming—and will come. And you yourselves, many of you, must in your own breasts be aware that already you see in the handwriting on the wall the signs of coming doom.'

And the wonderful voice deepened into a solemn organ note upon that word *doom* which rang out and died in silence at the close of the speech.

Shortly after, in a sort of reactionary mood, Mr. McCarthy writes:

Mar. '89. '. . . A curious sort of day this, with its grey mist and its atmosphere of lead, a sort of day when one seems to walk as

[1] The treatment of Irish members.

in a heavy, calm dream—one of those dreams when you seem haunted by old things that are past. Have you not found that some days oppress one with a sense like that?—days when there seems a pathos and pity in the very air—a sense of frustration and of nothingness—if there could be a sense of nothingness, which I suppose there couldn't. After that outburst I shall do a little dry history.'

'Just a few lines as I shall not have a chance of seeing you to-day or to-morrow. I hope you had a good night's rest and are the better for it. I have been out to Hackney and got my talk done. The lecture had one great and rare merit: it was short. I developed, as I went on, quite a theory about literature and democracy which I had never thought of till I began to speak. . . .' Cheyne Gardens, Sunday.

'I was so sorry that I could not go and see Campbell to-day, the truth was that a motion for the adjournment of the House was brought on by an English member to call attention to the arrests of Englishmen in Donegal in Ireland because of their active sympathy with the evicted tenants, and of course you will understand that I could not possibly avoid remaining to support him by my own vote. I shall come at 6.30 to-morrow if you can have me, and stay to dinner.' Mar. '89.

Mr. McCarthy has himself, in his 'Reminiscences' told fully the story of his editorship of the *Morning Star* and of his relations with John Bright. Differences in political views had of late years somewhat dimmed that friendship, but it had nevertheless always remained cherished in the Irishman's heart. When John Bright died on March 27 of this year, Mr. McCarthy made a speech full of feeling in the House of Commons, in tribute to his memory, and it is to that speech that he alludes here.

'. . . I have been overwhelmed with congratulations in the House to-night from all sections—both sides. My head was set swimming—I am growing self-conceited; you won't know me when you see me next—all about a few words I said in tribute to John Bright. It won't, I am sure, look anything in the papers. The only thing about the speech was that it Mar. '89.

was short—that it was unprepared, that the House was interested in what the Irish had to say, and was relieved to find it was nothing hostile or ill-natured or in bad taste. But I assure you I became the pet of the House of Commons—for one night.'

It was this spring that Justin McCarthy and I, in combination with Mr. Mortimer Menpes, the painter and etcher, started on a new book which we called 'The Grey River' and which dealt with aspects historical and picturesque of the Thames, from Greenwich to the higher pleasure-reaches of the river. Mr. Menpes etched, and himself printed the illustrations of this work, and Mr. McCarthy and I wrote the letterpress. It was published by Mr. Seeley in the form of an *édition de luxe* the following autumn. I think the doing of my part of that little book—for though a large and ornate volume, as befitted Mr. Menpes' etchings, the actual printed matter was not great—gave me more pleasure than any of our collaboration work. A great deal of it was done during pilgrimages Mr. McCarthy and I made together to places of interest along the banks of the Thames—an historical lesson to me. Greenwich, I remember, was a delightful expedition, and I have a vivid recollection of our crossing to Poplar and of my getting tired and being given a lift by the cats'-meat woman on her round—and a most entertaining companion she proved to be. It was among the factory girls there that Mr. McCarthy found a modern prototype of Dekker's 'Roaring Girl'—a play on which he had lectured; and I think that was the beginning of my more intimate acquaintance with the lesser-known Elizabethan dramatists of whom Mr. McCarthy was so fond.

I remember, too, a long afternoon with him in the Tower precincts, where by virtue of a special permit we wandered and took notes as we pleased.

And of course Chelsea and Lambeth and then the upper

region of the Thames valley had to be explored. Mr. McCarthy enjoyed it all as much as I did—as his letters show.

Spring, '89 (no date).

'It is midnight, and I am alone. . . . as the heroines of romance occasionally observe! . . . I send you five slips about the fascination of London. We have still to work in the lights and shadows and contrasts—all that part of the fascination. What I send is rather impersonal, but it will serve as a basis. The more you can do for it the better. . . .'

Thursday night, April 18, '89.

'Returning home to-night I found your letter: it was welcome. Of course I knew that lately one reason why there were fewer letters was the simple fact that you were so much engaged in prosaic details of life, which, prosaic or not, had positively to be attended to—and I am not at all displeased to know that you have, when thus occupied, been taking my sympathy for you as a matter of course: as a thing certain to be there and which needed no cultivation or word of encouragement. Now however I hope that you will soon be settled down in quiet waters—when this present crisis among your household arrangements is over: and that we may interchange more letters. I feel sincerely with you in all the dull and often wearisome, prose business of life. One's very nature needs and cries out for some expression of something a little better and higher and more refining—as in some rush of jarring duties one might like to stop for just a moment and clasp with sympathetic pressure some genial hand.

'I am so glad you liked the letters of the fictitious "Unknown,"[1] for it is now acknowledged by Macmillan that the book is a piece of mere romance, hardly even attempting a mystification: and I shall have to alter my article a little.

[1] The book to which Mr. McCarthy refers—a collection of letters published under the title of *An Author's Love*, given forth as written by the unknown recipient of Prosper Merimée's *Lettres à une Inconnue*—made a considerable sensation in literary circles at this time. The letters by the presumed 'Inconnue' were generally accepted as authentic; so much so that Mr. McCarthy was commissioned to write a leading article, I think, in the *Daily News* about them. Mr. Gladstone even pronounced the letters genuine; and I remember hearing from some one present at a dinner-party at which Mr. Gladstone was a guest and where the subject came up, that the Grand Old Man was not altogether pleased at his judgment having been proved wrong. This was only a small instance of Mr. Justin McCarthy's literary acumen which I never knew at fault.

I am glad however to know that my own judgment of the thing—formed long before I came to the almost confessing epilogue—was right. But they are *very* clever: and the woman's emotions are wonderfully well done—and I suppose a man could hardly have done them, although there are little touches here and there which seem to suggest to me a delicate and sympathetic man trying to assume a woman's feelings and expression.

'We had a very good meeting at Mossley near Manchester. Lord Sandhurst and I were the orators. And oh! I had such a cold: and I was as hoarse as Edgar Poe's *Raven* or Barnaby Rudge's.'

Spring, '89. 'We propose to go to luncheon with you to-morrow and then to go to Moscheles' pictures, and the others. We are all going to you on Sunday. So is Whiteing. I saw him at the *Daily News* last night. Huntly is delighted at the idea of doing a drawing room comedietta for you. Suppose *I* give you some evening a talk after the fashion—oh but what a long way after it will be!—of Whistler's "Ten o'clock Lecture"? . . .'

So many of the letters about this time are undated, save for the day of the week on which they happened to be written, that it seems impossible to place them in their proper order, but I think the Parnell meeting, to which he alludes in the following, must have been soon after the vindication of Mr. Parnell in *The Times*' forgery charge.

Cheyne Gardens, Wednesday Night 'Charlotte and I have come back from the Parnell Meeting at St. James' Hall. We *did not get in*. We had dined for convenience at St. James' Restaurant so as to be on the spot, but the crowd at seven o'clock was so great that we would not venture in. We lingered over our dinner: and close on eight, the hour for taking the chair, we made another effort. But the throng at the platform entrance was so great . . . partly composed of mere sightseers on the look-out for Parnell and John Morley and others—that I thought it much best to get Charlotte out of it at once: and we came home. I was not particularly sorry. It would have been a grand sight, but a vast and stifling crowd is a dreadful thing: and I had not to

speak: and so we came away contented. *The Times* case is closed: and Sir Charles Russell has got an adjournment for a fortnight to arrange his case. He will put every one of the defendants into the witness box in order that the Attorney-General may cross-examine them.'

And again:

'. . . You felt with me, I'm sure in our splendid success at Kennington. You know I was not sanguine about it. Do you remember Macaulay's line in his ballad of "The battle of Ivry." "*As thou wert constant in our ill, be joyous in our joy.*" I feel like that about you and our political triumphs—when we have them. . . . Spring, '89.

'I need to be refreshed by a talk with you, and I have several things to tell you. To-morrow I must go to the Commission Court. I shall be kept there until four o'clock and I shall have to be at the House of Commons to divide before half-past five. But if you could see me in the interval, wire in the morning. I am dining at the Mansion House to meet Lord Dufferin. Thursday too, I am dining out. Friday, thank Heaven, I am dining with you.'

'I send you, dear Colleague, Dilke's pamphlet and the page of yours about Chelsea, and some pages about Stuart Mill which you can work in in any way you think best. I will carry out your suggestions about other points, and hope to let you have them in shape to take with you on Thursday. I am delighted at the prospect of going to Greenwich to-morrow. I think we had better go by train, and return, if you have time, by the river. We can have luncheon at Greenwich and then look about and come back whenever you like. You can be in plenty of time for rest before your dinner-party.' Cheyne Gardens, Monday Night.

'I send you my outline of the Bolingbroke affair, dear Colleague. I went over there—to the churchyard—to-day in the mist and gloom. I thought it was just the right atmosphere. You will observe that the first page or two took a different view of things and made the Thames look like the Nile. We might, if you thought well, transfer that comparison to some other passages describing the river. I think it is a good bit of impression in itself and ought to go in somewhere, but it may seem to you an unsuitable prelude to the mist and gloom of the Bolingbroke day. I have left the description of Cheyne Gardens, Whit Monday, '89.

the churchyard scene to you. Put in anything you like. We might go over it when you have time—not Wednesday or Thursday, for I shall be out of town. Meantime can you suggest to me what to turn to next? For I can throw off a little descriptive and impressionist work almost every day, no matter what other work I am doing. I must say I don't think my Bolingbroke pages half dreamy enough, but I couldn't get it any better. I look to you for some dreamy shadowings and touches. . . .'

May 2, '89. '. . . I have been in court all day and have not yet been examined. Attorney-General has not yet finished with Parnell —and oh! such a contrast!—the Old Bailey tone of the one, and the absolutely imperturbable calm and politeness of the other. George Meredith was there and said the contrast was a study.'

Maidenhead, June 13 '89. 'I send you two or three impressions which may be worked in somehow and somewhere. I thought of a contrast, "Luxurious Thames," and "Poverty-stricken Thames": and my impressions would be for the first. Of course, as you will see, I want all the obvious and essential features of a river scene here and in this weather—an ideal June. These we could fill in at any time. I only send you two or three "conceits." I think the more conceits or odd impressions we can have, good or bad, the better.'

June '89. 'Lockwood came to me last night. He wants me to write for his instruction a full account of all my personal views, motives and beliefs in going into the National Cause, and joining the Irish Parliamentary Party. He wants this for his own guidance and in making his speech for the defence of his clients, of whom I am one. I fancy he wants to make a strong point of what I may call my English citizenship and such success, whatever it was, that I may have made in English literature to show that it was not likely I should have joined any movement that was inspired by blind hostility to England. . . .

'I am going to Taplow to-morrow afternoon. Write and tell me the best way of reaching you.

'I have been working at a "Coronation Pageant" in Westminster Hall for "The Grey River," the entrance of the champion of England and the challenge. I think it ought to go before what I had begun about the impeachment of Warren

Hastings, for my idea is that the dream should bear me backwards from the soirée in the hall, to the far-off trial of William Wallace. . . . I am quite sure that you are improving my slips on the fascination of London, for the very kind of impression they want, I know that you can give. I am very glad to see that you are on your guard against the tendency to run into leading article. Put in all the feeling, fancy and emotion that you want—I give you a free hand. . . . I could write more if I had time—just my thoughts as they come up—which you would understand no matter how inconsecutive, but if I don't catch the post, there will be no chance of your getting this on Sunday. . . . And Sunday is a dull day with most people. Therefore, I should like to break it for you with a greeting.'

'I send you some copy which I hope you will like. . . . My description in the Westminster Hall part will have to be verified, for I write from memory only, and what I wrote to-day has yet to be properly joined on to the former part, and the Warren Hastings scene finished. June 25, '89.

'I had a good long walk along the river on the towing path yesterday. I wish you were here and shall be glad when you and I can make our expeditions in search of the picturesque again. The river is all poetry. And you can enjoy small things so much. . . .

'I am not sorry to hear that you do not like "Mensonges," I did not like it either: it is clever, but painful, and its morbid analysis becomes tiresome sometimes. One gets weary of the *Suzanne* sort of woman—of her lying and her vices and her charms and her laced under-clothing. I am coming to town to-morrow and hope to see you, but don't wait luncheon for me. . . . We can work until six. I have to dine early, for I have to speak at a meeting at St. James' Hall. . . .'

'There is a wild storm roaring and raging in the House. I have nevertheless just finished a quiet political article. . . . I will be with you pretty early on Saturday and will go over Sir George Bowen's proofs and your sketches. I saw Roose to-day. He says I must not go to the States, so that is settled. . . .' Upstairs Lobby.

'I am sending this from the House. We have had a victory. The Government has just withdrawn the Bill which Upstairs Lobby.

we opposed, and which, only for our opposition, they would have carried by a large majority.'

July, '89. 'Yes, dear Colleague, I shall be very glad to go to Lambeth on Monday. I will come to you straight from Taplow . . . and I will bring all the copy. . . . I have been working at it a little to-day: in fact have only turned aside for a moment to write this little line to you: but I am not doing much. Unless one gets some very good idea it does not seem of any use spreading a passage out: and the page I have just done about the impeachment of Warren Hastings I do not like *at all*. There is absolutely nothing in it. On reading over what I had written to finish up your Church description, I became so convinced of its defectiveness that I destroyed it and have substituted a few lines which are better: or at all events not so bad. Perhaps I shall do better later in the day.

'I studied the Disraeli statue yesterday. It stands in profile as you look across from Palace Yard. The right hand hangs down: the left hand gathers some of the folds of the robe on the breast. The head is downcast: the expression of the face at once thoughtful and eager, as I have often seen him look when he had risen in the House of Commons and was waiting for the cheers of his followers to die away before he began his speech.'

Upstairs Lobby, July, '89. '. . . Everything is dull and dreary here. We are in a mood of reaction after the blows we gave the Government and the triumph of making them take their Bill back. But I won't bore you about *that*—only it *was* a triumph. I have done little except attending the House and trying to get my materials in order to renew work on the "Georges."

'Did Mr. Donnelly write to you about our allusion to him in "The Ladies Gallery"? . . . The allusion of course was by you, I had forgotten all about it.'[1]

Upstairs Lobby, July 25, '89. 'The debate is going on here. Gladstone is to speak early. I think our dispute among ourselves will end in our having to agree to accept the combined opinion of Gladstone and Parnell. Both are equally strong in the conviction that

[1] Mr. Ignatius Donnelly, author of *The Great Cryptogram*, etc. The allusion to his work on the legendary *Atlantis*, brought me, about that time, a large package of his autographed books, and later, pleasant acquaintanceship with this distinguished American.

we ought not to oppose the Grants. But I am rather disposed to chafe a little.'

Mr. McCarthy told me that at the Division on the Royal Grants, Parnell was the first of their side to go into the Government Lobby, and was received with much Conservative cheering. Justin McCarthy was sitting next Mr. Labouchere, who said : ' Go in and get your cheer ; it will probably be the last Tory cheer you will ever get.'

It appeared that Mr. Gladstone had made a personal request of Parnell that he and his party should vote for the Royal Grants—he thought it would please the royal family : and Mr. Parnell was quite willing to make any such concession that would please Mr. Gladstone.

Many of the Irish members followed Parnell unwillingly.

But Mr. McCarthy himself, as must have been understood, had no personal feeling against the royal family. In many respects he held an almost unique position as a member of the Irish Party. It has been said that ' no one could quarrel with Justin McCarthy,' and this from no lack of dignity on his part, as shown in his small passage at arms in the House of Commons with his former friend Mr. John Bright. But Mr. McCarthy's genial personality, the conviction of his absolute disinterestedness, to which even his greatest political enemies bore testimony, and the charm of his conversation and varied scholarly acquirements, combined with a singular gentleness of demeanour, made him sought after as a guest alike at Tory and Radical dinner-tables as well as at the most select in literary and artistic circles : and likewise, in the region which he himself has described so well in the delightful essay in one of his earlier works—' Con Amore '—on the Bohemia of Henri Mürger.

A literary friend of Mr. McCarthy and myself[1] has

[1] The Hon. Mrs. Walter Forbes, author of *Leroux*, *Nameless*, and other novels.

permitted me to quote from some notes of her long acquaintance with him during his life in London. Mrs. Forbes writes :

'Mr. McCarthy worked incessantly : yet never, however great the pressure upon his time and strength, did he forget his friends or neglect such social obligations as the immediate answering of letters and of invitations with which he was inundated. For at all times and at all places—even when surrounded by people whose political views were utterly opposed to his own—he was not only a welcome guest, but also, the electric power which drew imperceptibly from all present the best they had to give in wisdom and wit. . . . Some subtle sympathy seemed to emanate from Mr. McCarthy's personality which disarmed prejudice.

'I remember,' proceeds Mrs. Forbes, 'an instance of this in the case of a Conservative and intensely British officer, who was grievously put out at finding he was to meet the (then) Irish Leader at luncheon in the house of a relative on the northern side of Hyde Park. "Why couldn't you ask me another day?" he said petulantly to his hostess, who merely smiled and replied with all a relative's frankness that it was unlikely Mr. McCarthy would inflict his conversation in any aggressive manner upon the unwilling guest.

'After luncheon, however, when the men came upstairs and the Irish Leader took his leave, the British soldier, who —his hostess knew—was bound for his club in Piccadilly, asked Mr. McCarthy which way he was going.

'"To South Kensington," was the answer : on which the soldier promptly responded, "Oh that's all in my way. I'll come with you"—and went.

'Unluckily,' continues Mrs. Forbes, 'Mr. McCarthy was usually obliged by his literary and social engagements to hurry away from social gatherings. On one occasion, he irritated considerably a non-literary dowager by his reply when asked if he would have a hansom—

'"Yes please : only the rich and idle can afford to go in omnibuses."

'The Dowager observed privately that this couldn't be true and that she hated paradoxes !

'But sometimes Mr. McCarthy would go home on foot

from a dinner-party, and a distinguished and very brilliant member of the Liberal party once said to the narrator, "I would at any time walk back any distance with Mr. McCarthy to hear him talk." '

'Mrs. Forbes goes on to tell how at one of Mr. W. H. Smith's political receptions, which Mr. McCarthy had to leave early in order to get back to the House, the late Lord Salisbury, also leaving the party, met him in the cloak-room. They went out together, and Lord Salisbury said to the Nationalist member :

' "We have been on opposite sides for many years, Mr. McCarthy, and I do not think we have ever shaken hands. Let us do it now."

'So there on the pavement at the top of Grosvenor Place, the two men solemnly shook hands. Then each took his way to Westminster.'

CHAPTER XI

LONDON AND CANNES

During that summer Mr. McCarthy worked at 'The Grey River' chiefly on the banks of the river itself. From there he writes:

Rhone Villa, Taplow. Aug. 4, '89.

'. . . I am not very certain when this letter will reach you. Bank Holiday tends to convulse our rural postal system. But it is a greeting to you for the opening of the week. . . . I like being here. I like living in white flannels and not seeing anybody. I like going on the river. There is a broad meadow behind my house—belonging for the time to me—so that I have no occasion to set foot on the high road. . . .

'. . . There are times when the sensation of being alone has something grimly soothing about it. I don't feel in the mood to struggle with my historical writing, so I shall presently go out and walk to Bray, and pass through the lovely old churchyard and cross the poetic ferry and return home by the riverside. You would enjoy that walk. The weather is lovely and our "Grey River"—soft silvery grey to-day—is a divine stream. But I have to be in town next Sunday. I have to write for the *Daily News*. Paul is in command in the absence of the Editor, and I have promised to lend him a helping hand. We always do this in the holiday season. Saturday I am engaged to dine up the river—if I can get there, which is by no means certain, as there is to be a Saturday sitting of the House of Commons, and, if it be the Irish business, I must stay for it.'

Aug. '89.

'. . . I was deeply disappointed when I found on going to

the House this afternoon that I could not possibly go out of town to-morrow. This week is set apart for the discussion on Irish Estimates—you understand the phrase "Irish grievances." Everyone of us must be here all the time to vote in the division. I had to telegraph to General Boulanger to explain that I could not be at his dinner-party, although it would have meant only two or three hours' absence from the House. . . . We are having hard work at the House these times. It was so late last night that after I had finished my article at the *Daily News* office, I drove to the House and was there an hour or more before the division took place. I found myself at home, later on, reading the "Dunciad" by the light of dawn. Then I went to bed and did not wake up till noon of this day.'

'I saw Campbell to-day and he walked with me along the river. He told me that Sir George Bowen is to dine with you on Tuesday—not Thursday—so I could of course go to you. Thursday is for me hopeless, what with the House of Commons, the Irish Estimates and the *Daily News*. I shall be delighted however to lend you a helping hand with your friend's book. If we look over the proofs together, we could easily find occasion for marginal notes, and if Sir George is not much pressed for time, this is the best thing to do.' Taplow, Aug. '89.

'I have rushed down here because of the lovely weather, but I must go up to-morrow because of the *Daily News*—Monday, because of the House. We did really win a wonderful victory with our limited forces, and are very triumphant now because the Government have been compelled to withdraw and abandon their Tithes Bill. It was our vote that did it. We brought them down to a majority of four and should have beaten them altogether if they had gone any further, so they threw up the sponge yesterday. Exultation on our part, and immense gratitude from the Radicals who are willing now to forgive us our votes on the Royal Grants. . . . Taplow, Aug. 17, '89.

'I have been asked by the Editor of "Chambers Encyclopedia" to write the life of Gladstone for their new edition, and of course I shall accept the offer: it will be only a few pages.

'I don't want you ever to tire yourself by writing to me. I shall always understand that you are not equal to much fatigue, but let me have a line when I get home and tell me

when I may go to see you. If this fine weather continues, you ought to improve. . . . '

Aug. 21, '89. 'I much enjoyed your little dinner-party last night—not that there was anything new in that. . . . The interest in Sir George's talk and stories delighted him. We talked of you on the way home, and I told him what Gladstone had said—do you remember ? [1]

'We got to the House of Commons at midnight and I remained till about two. Sir George is a very amusing and interesting man, but I think colonial governors get used to regard themselves as little kings in their various realms of rule.'

Aug. '89. 'I am going to Taplow to-night, to return to-morrow for the sitting of the House. . . . I am growing very weary of the session, and the Irish business at present does not offer any chance, however, remote, of inflicting any defeat on the Government. The Tithes Bill discussions were really exciting, for they promised a result, but we can do nothing serious with the Irish Estimates. Still, life seems better to me just now than it has done for some time.'

Sept. 29, '89. 'I had a very pleasant time yesterday though you were worried by the feeling that you ought to be doing some work and by not being in the vein to do work. I have often—oh so often !—felt like that. I wonder if you have got on with your "Doorway" article. I fear with you that it is not enough for an article : it is only a sort of conceit with which to open one of the chapters of a novel.

'The more I think over the projected dénoûment (of a play) the more I get the strong impression that it would never do. . . . It is too coarsely murderous I think—and then it is a way of murdering which might so easily make the murderess seem not horrible, but only ridiculous. . . . You remember the fate of Dr. Johnson's "Irene" ? The poor heroine was to be bowstrung on the stage, and somehow the bowstring went wrong in inexperienced hands, and poor *Irene* could not die, and the audience grew hilarious.'

[1] Mr. McCarthy was, I think, referring to a luncheon-party a short time previously, at which I had the honour of meeting the late King Edward, then Prince of Wales, and of being taken in to lunch by Mr. Gladstone. I fancy the remark he quoted to my old friend Sir George Bowen—Governor of Queensland in my childhood—related to my association with Australia, but I cannot remember now.

'I have had a letter from Williamson full of confidence and spirit about the new illustrated Paper.[1] Sept. '89.

'I think I shall certainly go into the enterprise. The more I hear of it, the more likely it seems of success.

'I have given Williamson letters of introduction to Lord Rosebery, Lord Brassey and Labouchere. And I want Campbell to meet him some time soon, to dine somewhere and talk things over. I should like Campbell to understand thoroughly all about the new paper before he made up his mind to take any interest in it. *I* do not exactly shine—as you know—in business matters, and I should not like anyone to go into anything on my mere representation of what appears to me a likely speculation. But I do think this is good, and should like Campbell to get a full knowledge of it. . . .

'They (directors) are expected to attend Board-meetings once a week, and are to have £150 a year each. He went into the figures with me the other night, and the whole thing seems very promising. I hardly see how it could fail, for the best men of what I may call the parent journal, are coming with him. As soon as I get anything like a formal exposition of the case, I shall send it to Campbell to be privately used as his judgment will suggest. Meanwhile tell him all this. It is not intended, I understand, to put the thing upon the public market at all. . . .

'I have been to see Lady M.: she is staying quite near me . . . in Cheyne Walk. Do you know what she particularly wanted me to do? No—you would never guess! To play a part in an open air performance of "As You Like It" at Lord Ashburnham's place—*Stonehenge Place*[2] in fact—the first week in October! No, I did not accept—emphatically not—although she pressed me hard on the score of my supposed familiarity with Shakespeare. But do you know what part she is to play. . . . Why, Rosalind! . . . I asked her if she had ever worn doublet and hose in the open air before. She said, never—not even in a house. Doublet and hose in the open air in October to one not used to such attire must be

[1] A word to associate Mr. McCarthy's friend and the original projector of *Black and White* with my friends of recent times, Mr. and Mrs. C. N. Williamson, whose joint novel, *The Golden Silence* took me back, only the other day to Algiers, while their *Guests of Hercules* calls up the most vivid picture that I know of Monte Carlo and the regions round about.

[2] The name used in our novel, *The Rebel Rose*.

risky. Well, well—as the old Scottish proverb says : " Wilful will to 't." She is trying to persuade Lord Ashburnham to play the part of the Duke—but he does not seem likely to consent. Goodbye, dear Colleague. If you go to *The Middleman* [1] write and tell me about it.'

Oct. '89. '. . . I have been asked by Sampson Low to write the volume on Peel, for their forthcoming series, called " The Queen's Prime Ministers," and I am going to accept. Each volume is quite small and I shall be in good company.

'I have actually finished my second *Georges* volume. Oh! how crudely it is done: and how I detest it! . . . I hope we shall soon have some proofs of " The Grey River." I want very much that we should go over them together. It is important that in such a work there should be no mistakes. . . .'

Oct. '89. '. . . I am distressed about you and your mood of last night. Was it merely a passing mood—the daughter of a dream—or are you really in any anxiety ?'

'. . . I am so anxious about you that I must write a line—if only as I might leave a flower at your door because there was nothing else in my power to do for you. To-day you will have seen your doctor. How much I should like to know what he says.'

Oct. '89. 'I have got your letter, dear Colleague, and if there were anything to be glad of in such a matter, I should say that I was glad to hear that your going away was resolved upon. . . . It is plain that you have to go, whoever misses you, and those who will miss you are the most anxious that you should go. . . .

'I have been working at the revises and have done them all. Do you know that I found some errors still uncorrected—I mean errors in the earlier proof itself which we had not set right and which of course were not set right in the revise. One was altogether an error of *mine*. By some curious slip of the pen I described a monument as being on the right side of the church as you look in from the great door—whereas it is on the left hand. It only shows how one has to go over and over a thing to get it right. . . . Yes, I will come at half-past six or thereabouts on Friday and we will finish the proofs.

[1] The play by Mrs. Henry Arthur Jones.

About the further revises you need not trouble. Indeed you will not have much time if you go on the thirty-first. And the winter is setting in, and you ought to go.'

'. . . I have been reading such a pretty novel by Rabusson —not cynical, but very sweet. It tells of a man engaged to a woman who had been in love with another man before she knew him. The old lover comes in her way again, the hero learns of this and assumes that the old love has all lit up. He anticipates matters by writing her a very generous tender sympathetic letter of release, which closes with these words—worthy of Thackeray, I think—"*Adieu! Vous ne me devez rien. Je vous dois un beau rêve.*" Oct. '89

'But it all comes right! the girl sees that the former lover is unworthy and her love for him is killed—and she comes to the hero and tells him so. . . .

'If I don't hear from you to the contrary I shall call on Wednesday at half-past five, and we can finish "The Grey River," and send off the autographs and the list of presentation copies. The days are very few indeed when I shall have a chance of seeing you before you go away, but the sight of such a day as this makes me eager to have you out of London, much as I shall miss you. The air—if one could call it air—seems to have poison in it to-day.

'I have begun laying the foundation stone of my "Life of Peel." You will laugh at my carelessness, and I don't wonder, when I tell you that in looking for a note-book on Algiers, I came upon one in which I had made most ample notes for my "Thirty Years in London" and which I had absolutely forgotten! A complete skeleton of the whole book, with the names of all the distinguished persons I had ever met, carefully set forth—pages and pages of it! And I had forgotten that I had ever made it—forgotten its very existence! It came on me to-day like the discovery of a treasure!

'. . . I heard a touching idyll the other day—this is it in brief. A man and woman—young then—in love, but cannot marry. He goes abroad: she marries. He returns long after to find that she has young children and is living happily enough with her husband. She tells him there must be no love-making between them, that if he cannot accept her friendship they must not meet. He tells her that he would rather have her friendship than any other woman's love. So they are

friends and he sees her constantly. Years pass on and the husband dies. But the lovers do not marry. She had her children, now grown up or growing up, and she thinks the time is past. He accepts the conditions. Still years go on. She is old, and he older, and their tender friendship endures warm and true as ever. They are beyond the reach of scandal and they meet every day. They are happy, and so what is left of life for them will go sweetly and serenely on. But I can't help thinking with deep pity of the one left behind when Death has taken the other.'

Cork, Nov. 5, '89.

'I got here just too late to write by the London mail, so you'll get these few lines by a later post. The place where I am staying is perched high up on the bank of a beautiful river—to me a consecrated river, the river of my childhood and early youth. The scene is all meadow and trees and glimpses of the spires of the distant city, and the sun is bright and warm and the air is balm and balsam. I have seldom known an English June day so lovely as this day of November.

'I got my two leading-articles done but I didn't do half the work I wanted to yesterday and had to abandon my proofs of the "Georges." I have brought the "Grey River" preface with me and shall amend it here and send it to Mr. Seeley. And I meant to have sent some pages of "The Shooting Star" but I positively had not time. I shall have two heavy days of it here—a convention over which I shall have to preside which will occupy me pretty well the whole of to-morrow, a lecture on Wednesday evening, and all manner of meetings and deputations and so on, dotted in between . . . if we have time on Friday it would be well to scheme out the general lines of "The Shooting Star." Have I more to say? Oh, yes, ever so much but not time to say it—and so goodbye.'

I had been ordered by my doctors to winter out of England, and accompanied by my friend and travelling companion Miss Fanny Marriott, who was also ordered South, set off in November for Cannes intending to go with her to Algiers and Biskra early in the following year. Mr. McCarthy and I had been planning a fourth collaboration-novel, but this long absence put it out of the question for the time, and when I was free to work again, the troubles of the

Irish Party made it impossible for him to devote time to our joint fiction. So the novel which was to have been called 'The Shooting Star' got no farther than the opening chapter. I have those few pages typed in the crazy old capitals of his ancient Remington. The plot, he gave many years after to our common friend Mrs. Walter Forbes, who used it in her novel 'A Gentleman.'

The following letter was written after my departure.

'I got your letter and the MS. but it brought its melancholy before I knew that you were gone! All good fortune go with you and give you soft skies and genial air. This is a typical November day—foggy, muddy, dismal, drear. It comforts me to think that you are out of the influence of such chill and darkness. I shall keep you acquainted with all that goes on here. . . . I had to attend a meeting at Walthamstow last night, and to make a long speech although stifling with cold and hoarse as a raven.' London, Nov. 14, '89.

'. . . Do you know that I have not yet had time to miss you? I don't mean that I have been too much occupied. Nothing of the kind. I could miss you in the midst of eager occupations as I have many a time thought of you during the most exciting episodes of political life that a man could well pass through. Oh, no, I don't mean that. I meant that, as yet, I don't take in the fact that you are gone. I find myself thinking at what hour I shall call on you. I hear carriage wheels under the window and wonder if it is you who are coming. When I *do* miss you, it shall not be in any morbid or merely selfish way. I must be glad of anything that is for your good, but it would be a poor tribute to our close companionship if I did not miss you. . . .' Nov. 16, '89.

'I wonder if you are yet in Cannes or only on your way there? You are well out of our weather. Our thick grey atmosphere is clogged and clinging with clammy fog. One day we have warm muggy fog, the next we have chill fog, but there is a curtain of fog always hanging about us. I am looking anxiously forward for a letter from you, but I knew I could not expect one just yet. I went to a little party at Mrs. Jopling's on Saturday night. It was her birthday. She was looking marvellously young and well. Hayden Nov. 18, '89.

Coffin sang some delightful songs and an Irish girl gave us one or two of Moore's Melodies, in a way that brought back my early days with a feeling to me quite pathetic.

'Yesterday I went to call on Mrs. Jeune who is back in town again. Mallock was there and Lyulph Stanley and Shaw Lefevre and Smalley. At night I dined at Prevatali's. All the intervals of the day, I spent in reading up for my Peel biography. In one of Peel's letters written in 1828—sixty-one years ago—he is writing about the agitation in Ireland about Catholic Emancipation, and he recommends that some of the leaders of it should be prosecuted—mentioning especially O'Connell and the O'Gorman Mahon. Just think of it—sixty-one years ago and the O'Gorman is alive and well and active at this moment—able to hunt and shoot and manage his yacht as if time were nothing!

'To-day I am going to Mrs. Haweis' to give a talk on "*The Duchess of Malfi*" . . . no doubt the audience will feel glad when it is over but not so glad as I. To-morrow I am going to the dinner given by the Eighty Club in honour of John Morley. . . . There, you have the story of my immediate past and future—not very striking or interesting, but I think you will like details of what I am doing. . . . I received this morning from our dear old friend Whittredge of Boston such a beautiful volume as a birthday present. Fancy his remembering my birthday! And he does remember it exactly, for he writes the correct date—November 22—in the volume. The book is a superbly illustrated volume called 'Florida Days" by the authoress of "John Ward"—apparently, a sort of "Grey River" version of Florida. . . . Birthdays however are becoming a sore subject with me—but let that pass.

'. . . You will have heard of course of the revolution in Brazil and the conversion of the Empire into a Republic. So far it seems to have been accomplished in the quietest manner possible. The Emperor is over here, they say. He is a man of very high literary and artistic accomplishments and I daresay will be much happier in retirement than he could ever have been on a throne. He will probably be the lion of the approaching season—altogether surpass General Boulanger and run Buffalo Bill quite close.'

Nov. 19, '89. 'How glad I was to get your letter and to know that you were safely arrived at Cannes. Your description of the

weather there is in grim contrast with the conditions here, where in addition to the uniform dulness of the skies, we have now intense cold. . . . I gave my little talk at Haweis', it went off very well, people said. In fact, the story told itself and commanded its own interest and I had not much to do with it. Mr. Sinnett was one of the audience and Henry Arthur Jones, author of "The Middleman," and Lord Wentworth—the grandson of Byron—and several other lords and ladies. . . . Sinnett is giving a discourse next Monday. I should like to hear it. . . . I wonder if you knew William Allingham the poet—a very true poet in his modest way. I see by the papers that he is dead, I am very sorry, I used to know him well and at one time met him often. Lately he had gone to live somewhere in the country and I had lost sight of him. He was a very intimate friend of Carlyle and of Tennyson. He once said to me that the one great success of his life was the friendships he had made and he was indeed a man to feel and to get friendships.

'That dinner to John Morley was a great success in point of audience and enthusiasm and he made the best speech I think he has yet made. But it will excite a good deal of controversy. He has not gone as far on the labour question as most of the labour champions would like him to go, and as I think myself he might have gone. . . .'

'I envy you your blue skies! Here, I assure you, I have seen a glimpse of sunlight only once since you left and that was this day. A few moments afterwards, the rain which had been pouring all the morning began to stream down again. I trust that your adventure with the moth is a sign of coming luck. Is there not much good luck that can come to you? Think of restored health! We shall bless that wandering moth if he brings you this. Perhaps he was a good fairy in disguise! perhaps he was not even in disguise, and what you took for the wings of a bewildered moth, were really the wings of some beneficent floating fairy.' Nov. 24, '89.

That was in comment upon an absurd account I sent him of one of my rambles, when I had wet my feet in rescuing a drowning winged-creature which was being swept down the waters of the aqueduct to certain destruction at the sluice

gate of one of the tanks. Easy enough to idealise such simple happenings in that Blue Land where the air brings a dreamy, wine-like exhilaration to the blood, and where to look at the green pine-needles against the sky and to watch the young fig-leaves burst their sheaths and the almond-trees put forth blossom is to bring back youth and to make Nature work miracles.

In those days the Californie hill rising at the back of the 'Californie' hotel in which I stayed was wilder than it is now. There, high up, the aqueduct stream ran its course between fringes of wood violets and waterside blossoms and through a thick forest of pines, arbutus shrubs and Mediterranean heath.

I was very fond of that walk, so lonely that the drowning moth, dragon-fly or disguised fairy—whatever was its species—might have disappeared from space and time before any friendly hand could fish it out and set it free.

There comes into my mind as I write, the tag of an old song that Provençal children sang—

'Hanneton, vole, vole!
Au firmament bleu,
Ton nid est en feu.
Les Turcs avec leur épée
Viennent tuer ta couvée.
Hanneton, vole, vole!'

A scrap of folk-lore handed down no doubt from the times when the Saracens raided this coast.

In that hill-ramble you might cross the aqueduct and climb up to the saddle-back of the ridge. And what a panorama of snow-tipped crests of the Maritime Alps you would see spread out on the other side! But, if you stopped short in a crease of the hills where a mountain torrent used then to rush down a deep ravine, you would find yourself closed round entirely by ragged firs and spiky heath and tall

shoots of the aromatic sea-lavender. In that bosky retreat you could not see the town or the bay; and all that there might be to remind you of humanity, you would hear in the muffled strains of the town band in the public gardens far below or in the soft toll of St. Anne's Convent bell. Mount again a little, or, if it pleased you to wander further along the aqueduct until you came to a big rift in the pine-wood, you would see spread out before you a yet more glorious coast panorama.

Beneath you, Cannes, sloping down in scattered villas, set in palm trees and half-tropical gardens, to the curved belt of town and harbour full of fishing boats and masts of larger craft and skiffs with red sails. And straight across the blue waters of the bay—is there any sea so blue as the Mediterranean in bright weather or so grey and dour when the storm-mood is on it?—there lies the island of St. Marguerite like a great monster on the surface of the water with its thin snout of black rocks dipping into the waves. Then leftward, the long promontory of Antibes: to the right the old town and tower of Mont Chevalier; and beyond, the jagged line of the Esterels blocking the horizon. And, if the time be sunset, truly it might seem that the old gods in mantles of flame and purple and gold were disporting themselves upon a new Olympus. There would never be any gods playing about, however, when a mistral was blowing. Then all colour would be gone out of the clouds—livid now; and you would hear a threatening roar from the tideless sea, and the thunderous boom of great grey-green breakers dashing upon the shore. That is part of the odd fascination of Cannes. It has its own individual temperament—changeful as that of some great actress who plays one time in lyric poetry and the next seems terrible in sternest tragedy.

But in these later days—except for the mistral and the sunshine and the sea—Nature has things less her own way

here. The aspect of Cannes has been vulgarised and made meretricious by the fashionable crowds and the rush and whizz of automobiles and the ruthless march of the builders. The aqueduct walk and the forest solitudes have ceased to be. The once wild-gorge has been bridged over by a staring white road along which whirrs a never-ceasing train of smart vehicles. It was in the nineties, I think, that a forest fire swept the pine-forest, leaving a blackened waste from which the villa-makers permitted scarcely a young sapling to spring. The aqueduct remains, but the tread of many feet have worn away the violets from its stone copings, and it would be a venturesome moth—let alone fairy—that would poise on wing above the brim. Even the sea-lavender that we used to gather and lay on the wood fire at the hotel to make sweet-smelling smoke, grows no longer in big grey-green tufts with fat purple heads, but is scanty and sparse. Alas! all the glory of that old haunt has departed! Forgive this digression upon old Cannes, and let us go back to Mr. McCarthy's letters from the House of Commons and foggy London.

Nov. '89. 'There is nothing particular going on here. A controversy wages in some of the papers between George Moore and Robert Buchanan—gladiators well-fitted to combat. I hear that Parnell was at Brighton last week and was looking much better. He was greatly pained at some of the papers commenting on a ridiculous paragraph about his mother being in actual starvation in New York. It is possible that she may have found herself hard up all of a sudden. But Parnell has always been very kind to her. . . . And she has another son in America who is a very rich man, which Charles certainly is not. In any case, Charles knew nothing about the matter. But some of the Tory Unionists caught up the report and wrote as if Parnell—wallowing in wealth, has deliberately consigned his aged parent to starvation. The *St. James Gazette* was particularly brutal about "Son Charles" and asked why did not the poetess Parnell do something for her mother and

where has the poetess disappeared to ?—and remarked that the members of the Parnell family had an odd way of disappearing now and then. The poor poetess, alas ! has disappeared in the common way of flesh—she has been dead this many years. But is it not pitiable the ignoble depths to which party feeling will make some of our journals sink down ? Luckily, Parnell reads hardly any newspapers and so will not see most of the attacks against him and his family.

'The *Pall Mall Gazette* has started a new cry proclaiming Lord Rosebery as the next leader of the Liberal Party—the successor to Gladstone. The idea is positively childish. Lord Rosebery would be just the man if he were in the House of Commons, but no man can lead a party any longer who is in the House of Lords. He may be elected a leader and called a leader, but he can't lead. The man who leads must sit in the House of Commons and give the word of command there. The battle is fought there, and the man who commands the army there, is the leader and nobody else. . . .

'How I have wandered off into politics. You have brought it on yourself, for you asked me to give you some political news, and as I had not much else I have given you a disquisition. . . .'

Cheyne Gardens, Nov. 29, '89.

'I was delighted to hear that you are enjoying yourself, because the joyousness comes, I know, from revival of vital power and a rejuvenescence of life. Always write exactly as you feel. When *I* find myself in one of my melancholy moods I sometimes feel inclined to put off writing to you until the "dark hour"—if I may use such grandiose language—has passed away. But then I have always thought it would be better that you should see me just as I am in all my varying moods and tenses. They are often merely constitutional—physical. You know we Irish Celts are historically—and I believe quite correctly—reputed to be a southern race whom Fate flung on an Island in the cold and misty Atlantic, and who are always yearning for their lost suns and glowing skies. Now I must boast myself a pure-blooded Celt and cannot help having melancholy wrestlings now and then. But it would help to lift me from a pool of melancholy to know that you were enjoying yourself under bright skies.

'You will see by the enclosed cutting[1] that we have had a

[1] On *The Grey River.*

leader all to ourselves in the *Daily News*. It is by Richard Whiteing and is, I think, beautifully done, full of playful, humorous, half melancholy touches.

'I saw Campbell last night at the first performance of *La Tosca*. It was a very good "first night" for the time of year. Everybody who is in town was there. The play is for the most part dragging and tiresome, but Mrs. Bernard Beere was very powerful indeed—it was really a remarkable piece of acting. I went the other evening to hear Mr. Sinnett lecture at Mr. Haweis' on "The Astral Plane." To say truth, I went expecting to be bored and was most agreeably disappointed. Both in matter and manner the lecture was extremely good. It was spoken extemporaneously and in an easy conversational tone, and with great clearness of phrase and effectiveness of illustration. . . . I am going to speak at a meeting in Bristol next Wednesday and to attend a dinner to Sir William Wedderburn on the occasion of his departure for India next week.'

Dec. 2, '89. 'I have just got a letter from Gladstone [1] of which I enclose a copy—for I don't like risking the original on a Continental journey. The letter, as you will see, is very nice, but it is far too much of a private and personal affair to be of any use to us in the way of "Puff," even if we were inclined to make such use of it. I hope he has written something to Seeley himself which might perhaps be thus employed. The "party" Gladstone alludes to was one that he had talked of for some sessions past, to have Parnell and myself and one or two others —I believe Sexton and Healy—down at Hawarden for a few days to talk over things generally. It has not come to anything so far. I don't think Parnell has yet quite seen his way.

'Campbell dined with us last night. . . . He had seen the article in the *Daily News* and was delighted with it.'

Dec. 10, '89. 'I hope you have had no return of your fearsome death-dream, dear colleague, and that you are able to enjoy your life. I am glad that you are out of this dreary cruel winter. Here we have had heavy snow, then a dreadful thaw and now are back to our old familiar leaden skies and pouring rain. We were all thrown into some alarm to-day by the fact that a great Liberal Meeting at Nottingham which was to have been addressed by Parnell and which was looked forward

[1] On *The Grey River*.

to as the event of this part of the year has had to be suddenly put off in consequence of a telegram from Arnold Morley announcing that Parnell had been attacked by a sudden illness which rendered it impossible for him to go anywhere at present. Arnold Morley it seems declined to tell some newspaper men what the illness was—but I fear it is one of those attacks about which I have long, as you know, had a theory. It is most unfortunate just now. Rumours are everywhere; indications too, from Balfour's speeches and a letter of Chamberlain's, that the Tories are going to try a Home Rule measure—of course they will call it a Local Government Bill—for Ireland. I am to dine with Robson Roose to-morrow and am sure to meet some politicians on both sides of the field.

'Goodnight. I wish you a sound and dreamless sleep: for such I suppose is best for men and women. But if dreams there must be, let them be dreams from which you awaken with a sense of well-being, sweet as the fragrance of a flower.'

'I was at a rather interesting dinner-party the other day made up of men of various politics. Sir Charles Russell and Labouchere were there and the Duke of Marlborough and Louis Jennings—a sort of Free Lance Conservative M.P. and, as you know a rather distinguished literary man, and a number of others, including some Tory plungers who turned out to be very good fellows. Times have changed since the Duke of Marlborough—not then Duke—and I wrote two companion articles in *The Nineteenth Century* on Home Rule each championing it from his different point of view—he as avowed a Home Ruler as I!' Dec. '89.

'I came back from Birmingham last night. We had a dinner and a meeting there and I hope I did some good. Lord Spencer was in excellent form and made a very deep impression—very much of course because of what he was able to say with authority as one who was so long and so lately Viceroy of Ireland. . . . Parnell has paid a visit to Gladstone at Hawarden—on his way from Nottingham to Liverpool. And Parliament is announced for February 7th and there are rumours of all manner of changes and political enterprises and a stirring session. Unlike my usual way, I look forward to the House of Commons and the big debates and the exciting divisions and all the rush and thrill of that world of men that takes one out of oneself. . . . Dec. 19, '89.

'I have just been having for health's sake a long walk in Battersea Park. The day was very fine and bright, though cold, but as I was coming back the sun began to sink, and the place was melancholy, and I was absolutely alone, and the general effect was not altogether exhilarating.

'I have not heard from you for a week. Never mind, dear Colleague. I am not importunate. . . . I don't want you to write when you have not much time or have too many people round you—only when you are in the mood—are impelled, inspired that way, as I have said more than once.

'Perhaps I shall have a letter to-night. Goodbye, my most trusted friend.'

CHAPTER XII

THE BLUE LAND

At Cannes, towards the end of December, I was delighted one day to get a telegram from Mr. McCarthy announcing that he would spend his Christmas holiday on the Riviera. He came a few days, I think, before Christmas and stayed at the Beau Site Hotel—my friend Fanny Marriott and I being quartered at the 'Californie.' I remember that we three made some charming excursions. The country was new to Mr. McCarthy. I introduced him to my aqueduct walk, and to many others about Cannes, and we drove to Grasse and to Cabris—that curious old Provençal town in the hills behind Grasse, and to the ancient château of Gourdon, where we ate our luncheon in the terraced garden which commands a wonderful view of the valley of the Siagne, of the Esterels and the comparatively distant sea.

I don't know anything more picturesque in its way than the approach to that grey mediæval stronghold, with its grim bastions seeming a very part of the crag, where it falls in an almost sheer drop several hundred feet to the blue rushing Siagne and the modern village below. There is a zigzag path from the castle down the face of the cliff—a perilous, ladder-like descent, which I never had the courage to attempt, and which the country-people call *le Chemin du Paradis*. Afterwards, I made a story about that path.[1]

[1] *The Scourge-Stick.*

Scarcely a trace of vegetation—except a vine-trellis in the terraced garden of the Castle—showed on the gaunt crag, and all the hills around were treeless and sprinkled with grey volcanic stones. A most desolate spot, but with a curious fascination of its own.

Mr. McCarthy enjoyed our expeditions and looked the better for his change. He was still in poor health, but the state of the political barometer made a great difference in him, and just then things seemed to be going well indeed with the Irish Party. Never was Home Rule for Ireland so close on attainment. Yet, just as the game had come so near the winning, Destiny played the card which ruined everything for the Nationalists. This visit to Cannes was memorable for my literary colleague in that, the very day he left for England, he received intimation of the blow which was to dash down his dearest hope—news of the suit for divorce brought by Captain O'Shea against his wife, with Mr. Parnell as co-respondent.

But that was not till he was on the point of departure. Meantime, we saw a great deal of him at the 'Californie.' He had made himself very popular in the hotel and had altered some of the guests' preconceived notions of a prominent Home-Ruler.

They were a pleasant and friendly set of people in the 'Hôtel Californie'—but as in Algiers, the greater number were Tories, who held Mr. Gladstone and the Irish Cause in abhorrence. In our little circle, however, politics were avoided, but there was a good deal of literary discussion, in which, naturally, Mr. McCarthy shone. I remember one day at dinner, the conversation falling upon James Russell Lowell, and Mr. McCarthy remarking that to his mind for simple, poignant pathos, hardly anything in the English language touched two verses of a poem of Lowell's, called 'After the Burial'—verses which he quoted :

'Console, if you will, I can bear it:
'Tis a well-meant alms of breath:
But not all the preaching since Adam
Has made Death other than Death.

. . . . . .

'That little shoe in the corner,
So worn and wrinkled and brown,
With its emptiness confutes you,
And argues your wisdom down.'

This led to some one fetching the volume of poems, and, in a corner of the drawing-room after dinner, Mr. McCarthy read aloud from it to a small party of appreciative listeners.

I remember too, how, following up the subject, he said, that to him the most pathetic bit of English prose was that chapter in 'Esmond' describing the frosty evening in which *Harry*, having come home from the war, walks with his beloved mistress, and *Lady Castlewood* speaks to him of the anthem that had been sung.

'"*And to-day, Henry, in the anthem, when they sang it—'When the Lord turned the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream'; I thought, yes, like them that dream—them that dream. And then it went 'They that sow in tears shall reap in joy: and he that goeth forth and weepeth shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.' I looked up from the book and saw you. I was not surprised when I saw you. I knew you would come, my dear, and saw the gold sunshine round your head.*"'

Mr. McCarthy used to say that he found a difficulty in reading aloud that passage, for it always made him feel choky.

On New Year's Day, Mr. McCarthy wrote to me from London.

'Cheyne Gardens, Jan. 1st, 1890.

'These few lines will probably reach Algiers before you do and may serve as a greeting to you when you arrive. I got home all right and found London black with fog as it Jan. '90.

has been all this day so far—black with midnight blackness. My people were sitting up for me. We talked a good deal about this terrible business of the O'Shea action for divorce in which he makes Parnell co-respondent. I had heard of it in the first instance from Mr. Carter just as I was leaving the "Californie," but I hoped then it was only a mere rumour. No—the action has been begun—and what is to happen, I know not. I was struck with positive consternation. . . .'

Mr. McCarthy's feelings about Captain O'Shea's action were of indignation on all counts, and of poignant anxiety as to its results.

'It will,' he continues, 'have a terrible effect on public opinion in Ireland. I suppose, while it is happening, Parnell cannot well take part in public life—and how are we to get on without him? I am not equal to the leadership in health or means or leisure or spirits—and yet if I refuse, the papers all will say that I was getting sick of the whole thing. I feel frightfully upset by the affair.'

Jan. 4. 'I want to tell you about last night. I dined with Campbell at your house and the boys were there. . . . Campbell produced a bottle of superb claret—and we talked and we laughed. Ye Gods! How merry we were! "You are merry, my lords," says poor Ophelia to Hamlet, and he replies, "Oh God! your only jig-maker!" Well, I was a jig-maker last night, like the rest. We even made merry (when the children had gone) over the Parnell divorce case, and you know in what an entirely jocular and joyous light I regard that coming visitation. You can perhaps form some idea of the curious variety of feelings that were passing through me all the time. A poet could perhaps express in words all their meaning. I cannot do it. . . .

'Then I drove to the *Daily News* through the fog and wrote an article on the Russian influenza which has come among us, and, in lofty philosophic strain, advised the public not to get in a panic about it, pointing out with a fine scorn for weaknesses of humanity, that life has other troubles besides Russian influenza, and other duties besides taking precautions against it. I glanced at the article in cold blood this morning. It looked majestically philosophical.'

'I have been thinking much about you, wondering how you like Algiers and all sorts of things. Well, I shall probably hear from you to-morrow and you will tell me about your life and yourself, and now I will tell you a little about my doings which have indeed been very tame and commonplace and could not possibly interest anyone but you. I have been going out a good deal. People are coming back to town and their dinners and theatre parties. I have been at two dinner parties followed by the theatre this week already and am going to another to-morrow night—all given by different sets of people. I think it is better to get about in this sort of way —it prevents me from indulging in what you know is one of my ways—allowing one's mind to turn into a little darksome pool into which one stares, seeing nothing there but the dim and gloomy reflection of his own face. And I was at Pembroke Lodge on Monday . . . had long talks with my dear old friend Lady Russell and her son. . . . Lady Agatha had been very seriously ill but is now recovering. I was allowed to sit and talk to her, with the injunction from her mother that I was not to remain more than ten minutes and not to let her talk too much even in that time.' Jan. '90.

'As to literary work, I have accomplished two articles for Boston of which I told you. I put aside my "Peel" for them; to-day I go back to it and must get it done. Chatto insists on having the third and fourth volumes of the "Georges" in the autumn. It must be done. There is also the sensation-novel for Tillotson. Well, as far as health goes I feel in good condition to encounter the work. Perhaps it may do me good. We are in full influenza. It is like being in a campaign; every other moment we hear of somebody down whom we know. In London so far there are not very many fatal cases. I think too much is made of it. The theatres and actors and actresses seem to like to *exploiter* it and make sensation out of it by suddenly falling ill and having to cease playing and then suddenly getting well again. Last night, the manager of the theatre where we were, rushed on the stage in the middle of the performance to announce that one of the principal actors had been suddenly stricken with Russian influenza and could not play and must have his part read for him. Great sensation! Deep sympathy! Then, after half an hour or so, the actor himself rushes on the stage and Jan. 9,

announces that he is determined to play on to the end that night, come what may! Tremendous applause!! New and greater sensation!!! Many people of course are terribly frightened—will probably frighten themselves into the very danger they dread.

'The Hennessys were in Cannes while I was there, they heard of my being there and looked me up at the "Beau Site" when I had just left. I went to see Lady Hennessy yesterday—a sweet, kind-hearted woman. I fancy he will come into the House of Commons as one of our party. He will be a most valuable addition to our numbers.[1] I have not seen Parnell since—but I have heard that he proposes to lead the party just the same until the trial comes on—which is surely the right course to take, as he does not admit that there is any ground for the action. I have heard from some of our men; they are all like myself rather gloomy and despondent about it. . . .'

Jan. 11. 'It was nice of you to write at once when you had some more re-assuring news to give me. I am sorry you are having such terribly bad weather, but indeed my own experience of Algiers makes me not surprised. Still, the worst of the season will soon be over and when the weather is fine, it is deliciously fine. The best thing you can do is to rest quietly in Algiers and when you feel strong enough try Biskra. I was dining with a man last night who knows Biskra well and he says it is a delightful place and that rain is unknown there. He did not speak very highly of the hotels—said they were fairly comfortable.'

Jan. '90. 'I am going to attend some political meetings in the London suburbs and in the provinces next week and the week after. We were taken to the Empire theatre last night—I never was there before, and don't think I particularly want to go again. We are to dine next Monday at the house of Mrs. B. . . . I have designs on her—do not be shocked—they are purely political and not personal. Her husband . . . owns a Unionist paper. . . . She is coming round to be a Gladstonian and might influence her husband. I want to try and prevail upon her to get the —— converted into a Radical and Home Rule journal. That is my Machiavellian design. One difficulty in the way of carrying it out is that she is the most silent woman I ever met—and you know that I do not shine in the

[1] Sir John Pope Hennessy.

drawing out of silent women or men either. Still, I will try.

'We are dining at the Dilkes one evening next week also. To-night we were to have gone to a theatre but Charlotte has forbidden it—because I got up a little unwell this morning—odd and faint rather—and she insists that as the weather is terribly bad I had much better keep indoors. There is no political news of any interest. . . . Have you seen that Herbert Gladstone is bringing an action against our old friend Colonel Malleson for a libel in an Indian paper. . . . I have only seen scraps of this in the papers and do not know anything of Malleson's side of the case—I must say he never seemed to me a man likely to hit an unfair blow at a political antagonist.

'I have not seen Parnell since. People now seem to think or doubt whether the O'Shea case will ever come on. Some think it was a mere attempt to frighten Parnell, but who on earth could believe in frightening Parnell? I think myself much more seriously of the affair. Curiously enough, a member of our party and a very dear friend of mine, young Carew—as true and charming a gentleman as ever lived—wrote to me about the case. His letter came here while I was at Cannes and it was written from Grasse where he was staying and neither knew that the other was so near. He wrote very despondently, said he had gone there for his health, and the news quite spoiled his rest and holiday. But of course I need not tell you that this is not the view which either he or I would acknowledge to the ordinary public. . . .

'I have got your letter of the 8th, dear Colleague, and it is in one sense at least reassuring. . . . I am glad to hear that the doctor has put off the journey to Biskra for the present. . . . I welcome back the little calendar. . . . The Irish peasantry have a pathetic and beautiful way of saying when they are looking on some season of their lives which was especially happy, "Well, God be with that time." . . . I enclose some cuttings from American newspapers about the O'Shea case which will interest you. . . .

'I am sorry I could not get a copy of the jinricksha story by Rudyard Kipling [1] just yet—we only had the loan of a copy—

[1] Mr. Rudyard Kipling's *Plain Tales from the Hills* were the literary sensation at the moment, and when I came home it was to find him—quite a young man, unaffected, unconventional and an altogether delightful

it is printed in India. . . . By the way I have made bold to retain for the present your "Robbery under Arms"—I sent the other books to your house—for Huntly is eager to read it—is wild with admiration for it. . . .'

Jan. '90. 'My dear Friend, *I* never raved to you about the climate of Algiers. I told you I thought the scenery more picturesque than that of the Riviera—that the old town was most interesting and that there was no mistral, and there ended my praises. I remember writing you a letter after last winter telling you of my woeful disappointment with the climate—telling you of the torrential rains which sometimes made their way through the roofs and ceiling and inundated our very bedrooms. So please—please don't fancy that I, in any way, recommended Algiers. In truth my position always is that it is hardly worth while going out of England at all unless one can go to Egypt or to South California, or, I suppose, the Canary Islands, but these I only know by hearsay. . . . We shall have a hard session, I fancy, but I believe now it is not at all likely that Parnell will devolve the leadership on anyone. It is beginning to be believed I don't know how or why that he will be able to come out of the whole affair triumphantly. I hope so with all my heart and soul. I had not thought that could be so. But he is a strange man quite capable of imposing on himself a powerful restraining law and not allowing a temptation to draw him too far. The West End drawing-room does not believe in such men, but there are realities of life of which the West End drawing-room believes nothing. . . .'

Jan. 17 '90. 'This is not a letter but only a line to enclose and accompany the letter I send from my friend Rideing of the *North American Review*. . . . I hope, dear Colleague, you will write to Rideing telling him you will do the sketch. . . .

'I hope the elements are growing a little more kind to you. I will write a long letter either to-morrow or Sunday. Good-bye for this day.'

'Jan. 18, '90. 'Two men called on me the other day whose names were

companion at a dinner-party—the lion of that season. He had somewhat diverted attention from another novel, *Robbery under Arms*, by 'Rolf Boldrewood'—Mr. T. A. Browne—a compatriot of my own—which had brought into the jaded heart of social London a savour of wild adventure from the Australian bush, and to me, a whiff of the distinctive, acrid, aromatic odour of the gum-tree forests of my youth.

known to me. One of them is getting up a company to do something about Irish cattle and they wanted and pressed me to become a director. I was to be at no cost, was to do little or no work, was to be supplied with the necessary qualifying number of shares—and was to have five hundred a year. The scheme seemed to me a sound and fair one in itself and the leading projector is a man who has carried through many such measures and, as he put it to me, cannot afford to lose his repute for success. Five hundred a year to me just now would much help to smoothen things. But you would know already what I decided. I refused. They pressed me to take a day to think it over—I did and then positively refused. You see, I know nothing about the business. I could not be supposed to be of any advantage as an adviser and director in such a matter, and everybody here and in Ireland would know—must know that I had merely sold my name for the money. I could not do that, as I told them. I am too poor a man to have anything to do with such an arrangement. I have not a great deal left, take it any way you like—but I have my self-respect. In short, I could *not* do it, and I know very well that you will say I was quite right.

'What a day I had yesterday! Only think! I went to Barnum's show in the afternoon—after a luncheon at Mrs. Hemming's[1]: then I dined with a little company at Prevatali's and we all went to the Gaiety theatre. It was rather too much of a business. I did not do a line of work all day. Next week I have several things to do—for one thing, I am going to the country—to Hampshire to speak at the Liberal candidate's meeting—and I am to reply to Lord Selborne who has just been addressing a Liberal Unionist meeting, in the same place. I am very glad Rideing has made you an offer. . . . If by any chance you should go to America again, you would find the Rideings most charming people. I must stop, dear colleague—and I begin to think this is rather a dry sort of letter. . . . You will not imagine I know that the dry quietness of any letter such as this which I may write represents in any way whatever the reality of the man and the condition of things. But to what avail? As your present neighbours—the Mahommedans—would say—what is written is written—by Fate, I suppose.

[1] Now Lady Hemming.

'Of course I will help you with the "Literary Woman in Society."[1] I fancy it means a picture of her as she moves in society—where she is received and who she is—in all her different forms.'

Jan. or Feb. '90. 'I have two provincial expeditions this week. . . . On Monday, Charlotte and I dine at Sir Charles Russell's. I hope to hear some interesting talk there. He has been on a visit to Sandringham with Henry Fowler, a member of Gladstone's late Government, and Arnold Morley the Liberal Whip. It is thought a new departure for the Prince of Wales to hold out the hand of friendship to the Radical rulers. Among the other guests were Lord Hartington, Lord Randolph Churchill and Lady Dorothy, so I have had accounts of it from different sides. . . . Both agree that the Prince made himself very agreeable and that Russell impressed everyone.

'I am glad to say that the feeling about Parnell was unanimous—that it was a mere political plant and an attempt to hit a public man below the belt.'

Feb. '90. '. . . I was at Devonshire House yesterday to attend a meeting of the Bright Memorial Committee which Lord Hartington wanted to call before he leaves for Egypt. He was very friendly and genial. You have heard no doubt before this that *The Times* people have consented to a verdict for five thousand pounds damages in the Parnell libel case. I think this quite satisfactory. I should tell you that the judges had already ruled that Parnell could not press any inquiry as to the persons concerned with the forged letters—that, as *The Times* had admitted the libel, the amount of damages was the only question to be settled and that no inquiry into the authorship of the forgeries could be allowed. That ruling rendered the whole trial absolutely without meaning and worthless to us, so Parnell consented to accept the damages offered.'

Feb. '90. 'The House of Commons meets on Tuesday and we are in, I think, for an important session.—Last night Charlotte and I supped with Mr. Toole in his little room in the theatre after the Play was over. Sir James Linton and one or two others were there. To-night we are dining at the Grand Hotel and going to a "first night" at Terry's Theatre. To-morrow—

[1] The article for Mr. Rideing, Editor of the *North American Review*.

Sunday—I am going down by an early train to Folkestone to stay until Monday with Fletcher Moulton and his step-daughter. He is a very eminent Queen's Counsel—was in Parliament—lost his seat because of his supporting Gladstone's Home Rule Bill, but is sure to come in at the next election. . . . I have to come up early on Monday because I have to make a speech at a meeting presided over by Lord Dunraven at St. James' Hall. It is about the sufferings of unhappy women and girls—workers in the East End. I don't know much about the subject, I need not say, but of course I feel interested in it and am glad to lend a helping hand if I can. Our friend is also to speak. So life goes on with me. I don't know whether all these details will interest you—they must seem trivial at such a distance. I have just got three magnificent photographs from Walery. These are only proofs. I will give you one when you come home, if you would like to have it.'

'Lady Seton was asking me about you yesterday. I met her at a reception given by Mr. Toole by a committee of ladies presided over by Ellen Terry. By the way, Ellen Terry strongly advised me to dramatise "Donna Quixote" and write up Pauline for her. This I talked of once before on behalf of Géneviève Ward. Feb. '90.

'I have received, dear friend, your letter in which you describe your visit to the Moor physician.[1] I am glad you have met the Burtons. Curious—he is an ardent Mahommedan: she a devout Catholic.'[2]

'To-morrow is our opening day in Parliament and we have a preliminary meeting of our party—and I shall be kept going all day and shall not have time to write to you, and so I follow my inclination to write to you now. Not that I have anything particular to say or anything new to tell you. My folks have gone to the theatre—I would not go because I resolved to work at my "Peel." But now I can't work at it for I have so many letters to write which must be written that it will take me pretty far into the night. I tell myself that if I must write them, I will at least have the personal pleasure of writing to Feb. 10, '90.

[1] The Medicine Moor—mystic, astrologer, doctor—highly venerated by the Arabs in and around Algiers, to whom I had brought an introduction from a friend interested in occult matters.

[2] Sir Richard and Lady Burton, who were then touring in the north of Africa, and of whom I saw a good deal during my stay in Algiers.

you. Some of my letters are not unsatisfactory. One is from Wemyss Reid asking me to become a contributor to *The Speaker* and to begin with an article this week—which I can't do—I mean this week. Another is from Rideing of Boston asking for three articles for the *North American Review* and three for the *Youth's Companion*. I have certainly literary work enough to do—three times more than I can do with Parliament sitting. I came up from Folkestone this afternoon. I had a whole day and a half there of absolutely doing nothing. My hosts [1]—host and hostess that is to say—were ever so kind and nice and made my short stay very pleasant. The weather to-day was positively bewitching. One could sit in the sunlight over the sea and be quite warm. My host had to come up to-day by a train leaving at half-past five in the morning. He is one of the most accomplished men I know.

'We went to a "first night" on Saturday—a piece by Jerome K. Jerome—all rattling fun and nonsense. It seemed to be a great success but the critics cried it down.

'Dear Friend, what a letter of small details!'

Feb. '90. 'I had a letter from the Speaker's secretary the other day accepting the gift of "The Grey River" for the Library of the House of Commons and thanking us for it. I attend the House very closely.

'I was at a small dinner there last night given to two Armenians who are over here on a political mission. One spoke English rather imperfectly—the other spoke no European tongue whatever! He delivered a little harangue which his companion interpreted for us. John Morley was there. To-morrow evening I am to be the guest of a political club and shall have to make a speech which will be a cheerful performance seeing that at present I have so heavy a cold as to be inarticulate from very hoarseness. I suppose if I were a sensible and less busy person I should call it Russian influenza and lie up. But it isn't Russian influenza and I can't lie up. I shall follow your travelling movements with ever so much interest. As regards myself, I shall not do anything rashly or even speedily. I shall wait until you and I have talked

[1] Mr.—now Lord Justice—Fletcher Moulton, and his step-daughter, Miss Elsie Thomson (now Mrs. Kenneth Grahame), friends whom Mr. McCarthy held in deep regard.

things over. . . . Any definite change of career or country could not be made until we have won our fight—and by that time, who can say what changes may not have taken place. . . . I am writing too much about myself—let it pass. . . . I send you, dear friend, all loving-kindness.'

'I have just returned from the Requiem service for my poor old friend, Joseph Biggar, who died suddenly on Wednesday morning. He was a man absolutely devoted to his cause, and under a somewhat uncouth exterior half-concealed a gentle and affectionate nature. At one time he was very unpopular in the House of Commons, but he had quite lived that down, and his death was regretted by everyone. The requiem service was at a church in Clapham ; the day was steeped and soaked in fog ; a chill cruel east wind blew—the east wind that killed poor Biggar. The service was solemn ; intensely gloomy and I sat through it with darkening mind. Well, well, why do I tell you all this ? Only I suppose because it is in my mood. . . . I do like to write to you as I feel at the moment. I don't want you to think me one whit brighter, better, less mood-tormented than I am.' Feb. 21.

Just now, in addition to the grave political anxiety he was suffering—the imperilment of the Irish Cause by Captain O'Shea's case against Parnell—Mr. McCarthy was beset by financial anxiety—a result of the failure of an Irish exhibition recently held in London, and for a share in the debts of which he had unwittingly made himself responsible.

From a purely patriotic motive he had joined the executive committee of the exhibition, and in this way became, with a few other richer men than himself, defendant in the various lawsuits brought by creditors in respect of the unfortunate exhibition.

The hopes which he expresses in the following letter were unluckily not justified by after events.

'. . . I believe there is a chance of my coming out of my Irish Exhibition troubles more easily than I had expected. I had a long talk last evening in the House with Lord Arthur Feb. '90.

Hill and our solicitor, and it seems that a large number of the creditors would be glad to settle on easy terms for money down to avoid the law's delay. To make the story short—and indeed I don't quite understand it myself—it seems that if we pay in our equal shares at once—fancy! the Duke of Westminster contributing the same as myself!—we may get out of the trouble. . . . Now the loss of some hundreds—I don't yet know how many—is a heavy thing to me—but then I pay the money myself out of hand and without troubling anybody and you will know what that is to a man of my turn of mind. The second volume of the "Georges"—vamped up piece of patchwork as it is—is doing very well. It has not been out a month. . . . So you see I shall be able to meet this Exhibition trouble myself, without the help of the Irish party or anyone. Provided only that our solicitor be not too sanguine. I tell you this at once acting on the advice of Charles Lever's Mr. Dodd. That philosopher says if you hear a piece of good news, write off to your friends at once and tell them—for if you wait till the next post the odds are you will have to change your tune.

'I have been to see Sir Frederick Broome, the late Governor of Western Australia. He is to give evidence before a Select Committee of the House of Commons about the proposed new constitution for Western Australia, and he much wishes me to allow myself to be named on the Committee—which I have told him I shall be willing to do. But the reason I write to *you* about him is that I asked him concerning Boyle O'Reilly's noble West Australian savages—fit companions of Fenimore Cooper's Red Indians. Alas! Sir Frederick declares that there is no such race of beings in Western Australia—that the race there is, if possible, yet lower than any other Australian race. See what it is to be a poet! So you were right after all and I renounce the authority of "Moondyne." I have been reading a grim and powerful novel called "James Vraille." If you come across it in your wanderings, it is worth reading.'

Feb. 22, '90. 'Not much of any interest is going on here. The weather is cold, cheerless and dark. I go about a good deal. I have just been making a speech for which the *St. James' Gazette* has been attacking me. I don't seem to mind.

'We are in the rush of Parliament again. Last night we did not indeed get all we wanted—we did not get *The Times*

declared guilty of a breach of privilege—the majority against us was too strong for that, but we did get it recorded on the books of the House and by unanimous vote of the whole House that the letters were forgeries. What a triumph! Parnell's speech was one of the most manly and impressive I ever heard. . . .

'. . . The House was very full last night. Mrs. Mona Caird also dined with us and we had a young painter. Mrs. Caird is very bright and lively and never said a word about Woman's Rights or the Marriage question. I am going to Mr. Toole's farewell dinner to-night. . . .

'I think I am glad the House is sitting again—although it will cut cruelly into my work—but it is the most splendid of all distractions. . . .'

'. . . You will have seen with satisfaction that the report of the Special Commission is a triumphant acquittal of Parnell and our party on all the personal and definite charges brought against us—all the charges about which the public cared anything. Goodbye.' Feb. '90.

'We are in the heat of an election contest here in London. A vacancy has occurred in North St. Pancras—it is a Tory place but we are fighting it, and although I fear we shall not win, yet I know we shall make a gallant fight. I am going to the wilds of Kentish Town to-night to make a speech. How far off this must all seem to you away in Algeria—I don't know in what precise spot at this present moment—perhaps back again at the "Continental." How far off in the quietude of your surroundings and feelings! And all next week we shall be discussing in the House of Commons the Report of the Judges, about which Gladstone is to introduce a spirited fighting motion rejoicing in the acquittal of the Irish members and denouncing the criminality of the conspiracy got up against them. Well, it will be very exciting, but amid all the excitement I shall find time to think of how, if you were here, I could go to you and tell you of what has gone on and talk it all over with you. Cheyne Gardens, Feb. 28, '90.

'I have been very busy and rather active lately. I spoke at a meeting at Bedford the night before last and got back to town the same night. I have a lot of dinner-parties coming on for the next few weeks—I think every night next week—am I not enjoying life? Yes, quite so. Well, if I am not

particularly enjoying life, at least I am getting through with it and not leaving myself much time to think about its problems. After all, the problems have a way of settling themselves without any help from us or consideration for us.

'I seriously do think—don't smile at my seemingly devotional egotism !—that Providence has been very good to me and very merciful, and has enabled me to bear up against a shock and trouble and loss which at one moment seemed too strong and heavy to stand up against. Why do I ask you not to smile at this ? . . . As if you were at all likely to smile ! As if you would not feel for me and with me. I was to have seen Mrs. Langtry's *Rosalind*, but as usual at this time of the year, something came suddenly on at the House and I had to stay and leave one empty stall forlornly hoping in the crowded theatre. To-morrow night I am going to one of Mrs. Jeune's parties. She has been giving several lately but this is the first I had the chance of going to. I am glad to find that "Robbery Under Arms" is catching fire at last. Ever so many people talk to me about it. I have to write about six articles for various publications in England and America and then to do the article on Ireland for "Chambers' Encyclopædia"—all before I encounter my "Sensation Novel"—and the Sensation Novel before I encounter the third volume of the "Georges." I certainly cannot complain like the frozen-out labourers that I've got no work to do.'

CHAPTER XIII

DREAMS AND REALITIES

While we were enjoying fairly good times in Algeria, March, for Mr. McCarthy in London, had come in blustering, as regards both barometrical and political conditions.

'I have got your letter from Hammam R'irha—I wonder if I spell it right. Always provided that you are strong enough it ought to be good for you to go about and see places. Even the inconvenience does one good. I am glad that the place you are in, is pretty and picturesque. You cannot help having better weather than we have here just now. We have had a long succession of bitter cold days with a deathly east wind: and now to-day it has been snowing heavily and unceasingly. "Slayer of the Winter, art thou come again?" William Morris asks in his Earthly Paradise, apostrophising March. But this first March does not look very like a slayer of the winter. It looks like a reviver of the winter: it looks as if March were doing for the winter what Hercules did for Alcestis—you know the lovely story—and fighting to bring it back to life. . . . We had a tremendous scene in the House last night. Labouchere was "suspended"—do you know what that means?—for a week for declaring that he did not believe Lord Salisbury's word and refusing to withdraw or apologize. I am sure Labby was within his right—whether it be polite or not, I am sure it is not an offence against order in the Commons to say such a thing of a member of the House. It will be a great thing for Labby with the democracy that when he had made the statement he would not take it back or apologize. . . . I

Mar. 1, '90.

lost the great scene. I was away in the North St. Pancras division orating for the Liberal candidate and only got back to the House in time to find the tumult over. . . .'

House of Commons March 3, '90.

'I have had to come early to the House to-day to secure a seat, as Gladstone is to open with his speech the great debate on the Parnell Commission. I wish you were here to listen to the speech and were dining with me below stairs afterwards. I daresay I shall have to speak—perhaps on Thursday or Friday. I have not opened my lips in the House thus far this session. I don't feel any particular desire to take part even in this debate. But I have just seen Lockwood who tells me he thinks it important I should call the attention of the House to my own individual case, as it is somewhat peculiar.

'I met Campbell on Saturday at Mrs. Jeune's party. He talked of going to Monte Carlo when you are there, but spoke of great difficulties in his way owing to pressure of business. He pressed me to go with him if he should go and I said I should very much like to go if I could. It was a pleasant party, not too crowded : the weather was simply frightful—snow, slush, furious wind, chilling to the very marrow, and many people stayed away. I made the acquaintance of Lady Londonderry—wife of the late Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Of course he and she are wild Tories, but they were both very nice to me and she asked me to luncheon there to-morrow. . . .

'This is a dull dry letter. I am writing in a lobby downstairs and there are men all about me and my thoughts will not flow. . . . I wonder where you are just now and when you will be allowed to come back. I certainly could not wish you to come back until the time for such weather as we are now having has utterly passed away.'

Mar. '90.

'I had a curious experience yesterday, I went to a luncheon party at Lady Londonderry's and met a number of unqualified Tories. I dined at Sir Ughtred Shuttleworth's and met Lord Granville, Lord Cavan, Shaw Lefevre and a number of Liberals. There was talk at both places of Gladstone's speech which everybody had heard. The Tories, to do them justice, seemed determined to spare my feelings as much as possible. Lady Londonderry turned the conversation to a discussion of the rival merits of "Dear Lady Disdain"

and "The Right Honourable." . . . We are exulting here in having carried our St. Pancras election and wrested a Metropolitan seat from the Tories.'

'Probably you are in Europe again by this time and have left behind you "the melancholy Mauritania" as Disraeli called it. You were unfortunate in your weather in Algiers, but really I think everyone comes in for bad weather there, and I have no faith in the climate of North Africa—at least on that side of the Dark Continent. . . .' Sunday, March 9, '90.

'I was at a very pleasant dinner-party last evening and met Froude there and had a long talk with him. I had not seen him for years. He was very genial and friendly, and offered, as we are now neighbours, to come and see me, but, as he is seventy-two years old, I told him that I would go and see him—and so I intend to do. He lives in Onslow Gardens and he told me to come at luncheon-time and as often as I pleased. About Home Rule, he has modified his views so far as to say that the experiment certainly must be tried and that we could not govern ourselves less well than England has governed us. He expressed great surprise at Lecky's change of opinion. . . .'

'We have fought out our big political battle—this particular battle. We brought the Government majority down to 62—and we had Lord Randolph Churchill on our side—and he made a perfectly savage attack on the Government. You are so far off from all this that you could hardly be keenly interested in it. You are out of the track of politics too and have been this some time. The Government has been damaged a good deal and one has an odd feeling that almost anything might happen any day. I do not think, however, that we are ready enough for a general election yet—a year later it would be better for us. I am going to a dinner to-morrow given by Sir Roper Lethbridge to some Indian Civil Servants, and I shall have to make a speech. I know nothing about the claims or grievances of Indian Civil Servants, but as I shall only have to reply to the toast of the Guests, I need not trouble myself much about that. March 12, '90.

'I think the Prince of Wales wishes to signify good will to Ireland and the Irish members just now. Lord Randolph Churchill gave a dinner to the Prince, and the Prince specially asked him to invite Dick Power[1] to be one of the guests.

[1] The popular Whip of the Irish Party.

Mrs. Jeune is having a party to meet some of the Princesses on Saturday. What a lot of gossip I am writing to you. I shall be glad to hear from you, and then I shall know better whether you care for gossip of this kind or not. We are having a glimpse of spring at last : the sun shines to-day quite brightly and softly and one feels that the soul is entering the body again—I don't know whether you will understand the feeling of spring-like renovation which I mean to describe in that way. I feel in myself a strange tranquillity—I am unable to account for it. I feel as if I were quietly waiting for something. . . . Have I changed at all in nature and temperament lately ? I don't know—and it does not matter. I have not changed in friendship for you.'

House of Commons, Mar. 13, '90.

'It seems quite a time since I heard from you, and, though you are in Europe, you seem further away than when you were in Africa. I wonder if you got all my letters—there must have been a sort of little accumulation of them when you arrived in Cannes.

'The place is dull—Army Estimates and General Hamley. I used to admire Hamley when I knew him as a novelist and before he came into this House. Oh ! why did he come into this House ?

'I wonder, do any people say the same thing of a certain other novelist who shall be nameless ? Well, anyhow, that other novelist seldom speaks—never speaks at great length.

'I should go straightway home, but that it is one of my leading-article nights.'

Mar. '90. Saturday night.

'I have got back from my scrambling rush to Edinburgh, dear friend ; it was a rush ! We had a very good meeting however and full of enthusiasm. It was a meeting of the University Liberal Association and was mainly confined to members of the University and their friends. Its direct motive was of course to forward the Liberal cause in Edinburgh, but it had also the motive to forward the chances of Sir Charles Russell in contesting the Lord Rectorship of the University for which he has been invited and has consented to become a candidate. I think I spoke well—at least I got a good deal of applause and met with a splendid reception. I felt awfully tired and nervous when I began, and was even much dispirited—I told you I had not been feeling quite well lately—but somehow I shook it all off and became all right.

I wonder if it is absurd of me to give you all these details? They can hardly interest you at such a distance from the scene of action and in a place where anything that really is important to know, you can see in the newspapers. Let it go however. . . .'

'I have had a very nice letter from Froude to-day asking me to dine with him, which I shall do gladly. I dined out last night with the widow of a very old friend of mine. She has two daughters, one of whom has gone on the stage and is a decided success. I fancy they were very poor but now the daughter is doing very well and safe to do better. It was a very quiet little dinner—very nice and very nicely served. They live in the far-off Bloomsbury region—in modest lodgings, and there is a charming air of refinement about them and all their personal surroundings. I think we all enjoyed the evening. Certainly I did, in its quiet pleasant way. March '90.

'I dined at the House on Friday with Henniker Heaton—a dinner-party given to the new Governor of Western Australia—Sir James Robinson. Our dinner was interrupted by the now famous "count"—I wonder will you have heard of it?—when for the first time in the history of Parliament, the House was counted during a great debate and on a government night. We expect a grand row over it to-night.'

'I had a very pleasant dinner-party at Froude's. He is a charming host—but what a busy day it was for me. . . . Our friend Routledge is contesting the Ayr Boroughs. . . . I was urged and besought to go over from Edinburgh and speak for him, but positively could not find the time. It is an anxious and trying time. . . . I keep myself always busy—hardly give myself time to think. I seem to be like the cabman's horse in Pickwick who has to be kept always driving at the best of his speed, because, if he were allowed to stop for a moment, he would certainly fall. Yesterday I spent four hours on a committee on Western Australia: then I went to a committee of selection: then I went to tea at Fletcher Moulton's: then I was taken to see some sculptures (*à propos* of the Bright Memorial Committee of which I am one): then I went back to the House and was interviewed by two political deputations. Then I went to a dinner party in the House. Just as we had finished March '90

dinner, the House was counted and I came home here and wrote an article for the *Daily News*. All this was further varied by answering all manner of letters at such moments as I could snatch. To-day I have to write for the *Daily News* again, and I shall go to the House and write letters there of various kinds. To-night I dine at Fletcher Moulton's. To-morrow the West Australia Committee again, and I dine at Froude's and afterwards go down to the *Daily News* office and write an article. I shall get home between two and three in the morning—and I leave Euston a few hours later for Edinburgh. I speak at a meeting that night and start back for London next day. So that you see I do not leave myself much leisure for thinking—what with work and with what is called pleasure. I have not done a stroke of my own proper work for three days and shall not be able to touch it before Saturday at the earliest. All is tiring sometimes—now and then, and makes me feel as if I were growing old. What a long story I have told you about myself. I thought it might interest you to get a sketch of my daily life.'

March 23. 'I have met Campbell to-night, dear colleague, and he tells me that you will probably not return as early as the tenth of April. I must say that, anxious that I am to see you back here, I was glad to hear that you were not coming back quite so soon in the raw spring-time of this country. Campbell talks of going out to you somewhere in the middle of April.

'The *Black and White* business has come up again and Campbell is hopeful, even enthusiastic about it. I have told Williamson frankly that for the present all the money I have is mortgaged, if I may put it so, to the Irish Exhibition, out of which I have set my heart on coming without any help from any mortal being, and that I am afraid I cannot qualify now for the directorship of *Black and White*. Williamson apparently told this to Campbell, and indeed there was no reason why he should not, for I should certainly have told Campbell myself—and Campbell was very nice about it—declared that he would not go on the board if I did not go on and offered in the most friendly way to qualify for me until I came out all right. I was really very much touched by his friendly way—although I do not mean to take advantage of it.

'I have been working to-day and have paid a call or two. I have been presented to-day with a genuine four-leaved shamrock which is supposed to be a possession that brings with it eternal good luck and, better still, the power of bestowing good luck on others. I must wear it always about me somewhere and then it will be a talisman. It is really a very rare thing and hence the legend. I have put it in my purse wrapped in paper and will keep it as long as it lasts. A little good luck would certainly be welcome to me—and, if it has the marvellous power ascribed to it, my little four-leaved shamrock shall give you the best share of its beneficence.

'I am continuing this letter on the Sunday afternoon. I have been to luncheon at Lady Dorothy's and then paid some calls. George Russell—nephew of my old friend Lady Russell—was there, and Jeune and Sir William Marriott (a member of the Government) and one or two other men: no women. . . . We talked a lot of politics. Then I went on to Fletcher Moulton's. . . . Dr. Quain came in and kept us a long time amused with his droll stories. I am going to Birmingham on Tuesday to speak at a meeting with Lord Spencer. I wish I had not accepted that engagement because Parnell's meeting at Nottingham—the postponed meeting—is fixed for Friday and I should so like to have gone. But it is better as it is.

'In telling you the other day of the difficulties in the way of my leaving town for some time yet, I forgot to mention my lawsuits (in connection with the Irish Exhibition). I don't know when they are coming on, but my lawyer tells me there are two of them at least which I must attend at and give evidence. That is a bore, otherwise I do not let it trouble me much—or at all.

'We are all deeply grieved about Browning's death—my little household not less than others. Browning was always very nice to me. I met him quite lately, just before he went to Venice, and he seemed as young and full of life as ever. Well, he had a long, a full, and a happy life on the whole and he lived it out to the last. . . . Tell me of your plans. . . . We have dreary times of it here with the fogs and the sodden reeking atmosphere. We went to "The Dead Heart" last night. I had not seen it before. I thought Irving and Bancroft good—the play dull.'

Cheyne Gardens, Thursday March '90.

'I am looking out for a letter from you. I shall be going to Edinburgh to-morrow and, if I should not be able to write to you before leaving, you will understand why it is and so will not be surprised. We are back in dreary winter again. To-day is like yesterday—wet, cold and altogether dispiriting and miserable. I hope you will not have to return home at some time when the weather is still chill and damp—it might do you much harm. . . .

'I have nothing to tell you in the way of news. Everything goes on in the usual form. I pass my existence, roughly speaking, in writing letters, going to meetings and sitting at dinner-tables. It seems a curiously unprofitable way of spending one's existence—but what can one do? I feel sometimes weighted with an oppressive sense of solitude—although in the physical sense I am hardly ever one moment alone unless when I am asleep. I wonder why this is—whether it is partly physical—whatever it is, it is a decidedly unpleasant sensation as you can well imagine. I should like to go away somewhere—not for a hasty scrambling rush up and down the Edinburgh line, but to some quiet restful place where there would be warm air and soft skies and brightness and no meetings and no political correspondence and no dinner-parties, only quiet rambles by a river and in woods, but I don't very well see how I could get at all these comforts. I have been asked by Fletcher Moulton to go with him and his stepdaughter for a short trip to Holland in the Easter holidays and to join Lord and Lady Coleridge there. But I do not intend to go, I am too busy. It was very kind of him to ask me, and I felt pleased. This is a very complaining, doleful, atrabilious sort of letter to send to a friend who needs rest and sympathy very much herself.'

March 26.

'A reminder of our colleagueship has come to me to-day in the form of some red-bound copies of "The Rival Princess." I do not like to see the new name so well as the old.[1] I do not think the book could ever be very popular. I fancy that as its authorship is announced, the authors will probably come in for some very sharp criticism. However, as one of the authors is away and will probably never see any of the criticisms, and would not very much care even if she did see them—and as the other author does not care at all, there will

[1] *The Rebel Rose*, now published, with our names, under that title.

be no harm done. It brought back curious memories and associations to open the volume. What a long time it seems to me already in existence—that book; and under what various conditions it was begun, ended and published. And now it comes up in new form—like a sort of re-birth—or a resurrection—one does not quite know which.

'I quite understand your not writing often. You will write when you feel that there is anything you wish to say. I write to you because I think you may want companionship and will be glad to get a letter from me even when I have nothing very particular to say to you as is the case to-day. I am in a curious mood at present. Existence appears oddly unreal to me. I seem as if I were drifting into some strange state of apathy. I don't know whether this will convey any clear idea—I don't suppose it will—yet I can't describe it any better. Some things oppress rather than depress me. The other day I met Roose at a dinner party and he told me I was looking unwell and that I must go to see him. I did so, feeling rather a hope that he would say there was something physically wrong with me which might explain this odd condition I told you of. But no, he ended by telling me there was not a serious symptom of anything wrong. I am to see him again on Friday. I have to go to the House of Commons to get in time for a division—this is Wednesday. To-night I give an harangue—would 'twere done. I wish you were there to hear it. Your companionship would be a sort of anchor to me. Yet I would not, if I could, have you back in England, until the spring is well on.'

Cheyne Gardens, Friday, March 28.

'I have got your last letter and am looking forward to your return as an event now within measurable distance. To-day we have had a flash not merely of spring but of actual summer on us all of a sudden. Yesterday was as grim and as grey as a misanthrope could desire—I described to you the wind-scourged Terrace—and behold to-day all is sun and glow and warmth and the mere sense of living carries a certain joy along with it. Well, it will not be for long, I daresay. To-morrow in all probability we shall be back to our rain and our dimness and our chill winds again. Let us live while we may live! I am having rather a busy day of it. I began by going to see Roose—then I went to the House and attended the sitting of the Western Australia Committee. Now I

have come here to do some literary work and write some political letters, and such. I am dining out this evening in Cleveland Square, St. James' Place. I drive home from there to take Charlotte to a party at Mrs. Mona Caird's which is at Lancaster Gate and I have to be back at the House of Commons to take part in a division. I wonder if you are doing any work just now? Our poor friend Routledge lost his election partly because of a dinner he gave Toole and several actors on a Sunday, which got into the papers, and his opponents in the Ayr Boroughs made fearful capital out of it to rouse all the Sabbatarians against him. It was a very unwise thing to do for he must have known what the feeling in Scotland is. Also, he displeased some voters by not going in decidedly for Scottish Home Rule. I told you I had been to see Roose to-day. He wants me to take a short holiday—but it is very doubtful if I could—what with work of all kinds—except for a few days, and then I know he would want me to go to some dreary health-restoring place. Really, I am perfectly well, except for the work and the worry which are part of the life of most mortal creatures.'

March 29, 1890. 'Tell me about the Burtons' doctor,[1] dear Colleague. You only made passing allusion to him once or twice—and I am interested in the tale of him. I hope to call at Norfolk Square to-day and ask after Campbell. . . . I had a busy day yesterday with the House of Commons and Committees and dinner parties. By the way, I met Mr. Sinnett at Mrs. Caird's party. It was a very crowded party—and I think all the cranks and crotcheteers and people "with views of life" who are to be found in London were there. . . . I had to leave early and get to the House in time for an important division—and there was such a crowd that I could not easily escape—and I got into the House exactly as the Speaker was rising to put the question. Two seconds more and the doors would have been closed against me. Earlier in the evening I had been at a small and very pleasant dinner given by the man who has the odd pretty little house near St. James' Palace which in former days Lord Randolph Churchill used to occupy. To-day I am going to see a few—a very few—pictures, and to-morrow I am going out to luncheon at one place:

[1] Dr. Grenfell Baker, who was with Sir Richard Burton till the latter's death.

tea at another and dinner at a third. On Monday I am going to Windsor to speak for the Liberal candidate. I have no particular news. You will have seen before this of the fearful cyclone which has nearly destroyed Louisville in Kentucky. It is a shocking calamity. I have pleasant memories of Louisville. The last time I was there, I dined at the house of a young woman who was said to be the most beautiful girl in Louisville. Her husband and her brother and she were very kind to me and took me about a good deal. Last session her husband and she came to London and called on me at the House. I hope my poor little beauty has not been one of the numerous victims in Louisville. My lawsuits are still hanging over me neither off nor on. *Black and White* seems to be starting all right but I really do not know whether I shall be able to find the money to qualify myself as a director. Of course I could borrow it, but I don't like doing that and I am afraid to pay it away myself because of the still impending lawsuits. So, for the moment I let things drift. It becomes a little wearisome in the end to be always having to look after money, to try to get enough—and to keep it—two achievements which I have always found very difficult. Yet I must not complain. Few men ever trouble themselves less about money affairs than I do.'

'I went and saw some pictures yesterday—and oh! how dreary some of the work was. Mrs. Jopling was very agreeable and I liked her things: but there was a dreadful new gallery of some sort which was full of good-for-nothing works of art, and there was a hustling and stifling crowd, and I got pounced on by some awful bores and so I soon quitted that building. I went to one other place and then I broke down and gave it up altogether and went home and turned to some work.' March 30.

'I have your two little letters. Do not think about writing when you are not in the mood. I shall assume that you will write when you feel in a condition for writing. . . . To-day I have to go to Windsor. A vacancy has come there because of the retirement of Richardson Gardner—a man who has a château at Cannes[1] and whom I was going to call upon one day there under the impression that he was my friend March 31.

[1] Then, 'Château Louis Treize,' above the Hôtel Californie—Mr. McCarthy and I lunched there later. Now, it has passed into other hands and is called Castel Maggi.

Herbert Gardner. . . . Richardson Gardner has retired and the Liberals are fighting Windsor. We shall be beaten, that is certain—but we shall make a good fight and we have the best possible candidate in Grenfell[1] who was in the House before and who is a capital landlord and a most popular man, the champion puntist of the Thames and a brilliant athlete, besides being a good speaker and a sound politician. He lives at Taplow Hall and I am sure you must know him. . . .

'I appear in "Our Celebrities" of this month. The photograph is admirable, but the biography is long, wordy and so full of overdone praise as to be quite ridiculous. Besides it gives me credit for opinions I never entertained—says that I declare Cervantes to be the greatest author who ever lived—much greater than Shakespeare—and I leave you to judge whether I ever said *that*. . . . People are speculating on the probability of a marriage between Parnell and Mrs. O'Shea—if a divorce be obtained. I do not like that prospect. . . .'

April 1, 1890. '. . . I went to Windsor. . . . Two other Radical members came with me. We had a capital meeting and there was immense enthusiasm. We have, as I told you, an excellent candidate. I believe there is not the smallest chance of winning the place. Young Harcourt—Sir William's son—who has taken up his abode in the place as a sort of electioneering manager—told me that the thing was out of the question, and that the utmost we could hope for was to be in a better position than we were before. A place like Windsor is always under aristocratic influence. You will probably have the news of the result telegraphed to the French papers before you get this—the news first and the forecast afterwards. I shall miss the House of Commons when it rises for the Easter recess. It is such a capital place for taking one out of one's own atmosphere and one's own individuality that there is something healthful about it—one feels as if he were in a perpetual breeze. We are going to an afternoon party to meet a French Professor who, I am told and am willing to believe, is a very distinguished man—but of whom I can tell you little more than that. We shall have quiet times for the next week or so. Everybody will be out of town. And I shall try and get some work done.

[1] Now Lord Desborough.

The amount of work I have before me waiting execution is something appalling. The expedition to Holland of which I told you is given up. Holland is still too cold to be pleasant and my friends, who asked me to accompany them, are going to Folkestone or some other sea-side place and I may make them a Saturday to Monday visit. I am to see Roose to-morrow and dread his ordering me to some German place or other. . . . And so you are in your fortieth year—and I—do you know—am in my sixtieth ! . . . Anyhow, I don't care—and I don't suppose you do. . . .'

'. . . I was standing on the Embankment near this place yesterday and looking towards the south side of the river where we looked at it one day when we were " prospecting " for " The Grey River "—looked in the direction of the Bolingbroke Church and all that region. It was a soft, grey, dreamy day with clouds scattered lightly along the west in the way of the sinking sun. It was a ghostly kind of hour, and there was a faint west wind and I seemed to become aware of the presence of a group of ghosts there on the horizon. They were ghosts that belonged to me and my past and my work—and to that region on which I was looking. There were my own ghosts—the ghosts of myself and my young wife when we lived in that region hundreds of years ago. There were the ghosts of two or three people we knew there then—one of whom re-visited me in the flesh—oh ! so very much in the flesh !—not many months ago—I told you of her. There were the ghosts of the people I created for myself in " My Enemy's Daughter " and who belong to that place. There were the much later ghosts of the men and women whom I have made to live there in " Camiola " ; and there were ghosts . . . later still—and latest of all, there were the phantoms not so much from as belonging to " The Grey River." How plainly, how distinctly I saw them all—all together in a group and in a flash, yet each form perfectly distinct ! How I was able to see and distinguish so many friends and figures lighted up for one moment—lighted up by the sunset—I have no idea ; but there they were, the real and the unreal—those of earth and those of fancy equally recognisable. Was it not curious ! I was for the moment—for the instant—positively possessed by a sense of reality—of actuality—and when all vanished as quietly and as suddenly

April 2, 1890.

as it had come up, I felt distressed, bereaved—yet a little bewildered by a sense of something uncanny which it would be as well not to see again. I daresay I was in a dreamy mood with my senses only half awake—and of course that region is full of memories for me—and it was sunset—the twilight hour when fancies easily take shape for people at all of the dreamy mood. Anyhow, there was the experience, and it was peculiar, interesting, somewhat melancholy—a good deal eerie. I shall probably never see it again because, as I look out over that region, I shall be expecting it and prepared for it—and it will not come. . . .

'We are waiting in anxiety for to-night's news—the news of the Windsor election. About the main fact of the result we have little doubt indeed, but our anxiety is to know whether and how far we shall reduce the majority. I wonder how you are all this time and whether you are at Grasse and whether you are better. I have not heard about Campbell since. I will call to-morrow. I shall be glad to hear from you whenever you are impelled to write. Goodbye, my best friend.'

Easter Sunday.

'Your letter is very hopeful—the most hopeful I have yet had, and it gave me real pleasure. I see signs in it of reviving health.—And you will be in London on the 17th. You will let me know when I may come and see you—but of course I shall hear from you between this and then. I am glad you are going to see Genoa and Milan. I love Genoa. Milan is not very interesting, except for the Cathedral and the "Last Supper." It is too French—not Italian enough. Can you not go to Venice? It seems a pity to be so near Venice and not to see it. I am going to Folkestone to-day, which is not quite Venice. . . . It will be very quiet, a man, two girls and myself—all fond of quietude, and reading and talk and fine weather. The autumn manœuvres are going on in and around Folkestone now, but I am sure my host and hostesses care as little about shows of the kind as I do, and we shall let the gay and giddy world go by. I do not very well know Winwood Reade. I read at one time his "Martyrdom of Man," and I knew him personally but not well—not at all intimately. He is dead, is he not? He was a nephew of Charles, as of course you know. He had passed out of my memory somehow, but I know that I was greatly impressed at the time by the books of his which I

read. Just now the man most talked of in literature here is Rudyard Kipling. I find that my prophecies about him have been quite fulfilled. He is the sensation of the hour and has shoved all the rest out of sight—for the time. The literary success is undoubtedly well-deserved. There is nothing new to tell you—except that I have this morning had a letter from Parnell—I had not heard from him for a long time. It is only about money matters—the Parliamentary Fund which has fallen low and which he will replenish and which he thinks had better be managed for the future by him and me alone. We had, until lately, business help from poor Biggar. I need not tell you what a valuable man of business *I* am.'

'This place is like a beleaguered city with the marching and counter-marching—the fifing and drumming of soldiers and volunteers. . . . You will probably have arranged your time of departure—indeed I don't feel sure that this will reach you before you leave. I launch it merely as a God-speed. . . . I am going up to town to-day. I return to-morrow for a dinner party given by Sir Albert Rollit—then I go up again on Thursday—shall perhaps come down Saturday till Monday: then Parliament re-opens and brings the old life with it. I have had my usual ill-luck in weather down here. It is cold, windy, wet, and one has to hang over fires. I envy the people to whom the weather makes no difference—but I was never like that—not even in my youngest days.' Folkestone, April 6, '90.

'I am here again. I dined at a large and pleasant dinner-party last night. A Tory host and a majority of Radical guests, and we discussed politics, and, strange to say, with perfect good temper. I am going up to London to-morrow, chiefly for a dinner-party, come down again on Saturday and go back on Monday for good—or ill. Then the life of the House sets in again. I am glad of it. I yearn for it, with its vividness, its rush, its crowds, its passion and its storm—yes, even its long lapses of dulness—all—all combine to make one feel what a small unimportant creature he is, unless in so far as he is a part of a great moving whole. We shall have some important debates—and it will be like living.' Folkestone, April 10, '90.

'. . . I have come up to attend a dinner-party and write a leader, and the dinner-party is over and the leader is written and I am waiting for the proof. We have won a victory, though only by a small majority, in Carnarvon, and got a *Daily News* Office, April 11, '90.

Liberal in the place of a Tory and we are naturally somewhat jubilant because we have not of late been doing quite so well as we expected. It seems not quite fair to expect you to take an interest in these details when you are at such a distance and have other things to think of, but I pour out my mind to you, and I think I am more engrossed in politics than ever. You see the end is nearing—the grip is becoming closer every day. But no—I will not go on. I spare you more of this. I hope you will not find me a terrible political bore when you come back.'

April '90. '. . . This afternoon we had a sunny hour or two at Folkestone and we sat in a well sheltered and enjoyable nook on the cliff and looked on the sea and the sails of the schooners, dark against the sunshine. . . . I have had a very pleasant time here. My friends are ever so kind and are fond of books—and my host and I are as brothers in our love of the Greek dramatists and Shakespeare and Goethe—only think! . . . To-day some people are coming to luncheon, Sir James Matthews the Judge, and his wife and daughter and some others. Last night we went to a circus, which I positively enjoyed. When there are fine glimpses, we walk or sit on the cliffs and look at the sea and, on the whole, it must be called a very pleasant little holiday. I shall be glad however when the House of Commons sits again. I want the noise, the rush, the eagerness, the strife, the emulation, all the emotion. Then no doubt, after man's agreeable fashion, I shall begin to yearn for the quietude again.'

House of Commons, April 17. 'Only a grasp of the hand, dear friend. . . . For it is the day of the Budget—and I have to write about it, which means that I shall have to keep in my place all the time. . . . My lawsuits have not begun yet. It is said that the Parnell case will not come on—that O'Shea has thought better of it—but I don't know anything for certain. This is a poor little greeting, yet I send it even, such as it is. Goodbye.'

April '90. 'I have just got back from a meeting on the South side of London where I delivered an oration in a vast building which is really the public baths drained for the hour and converted into a hall of assembly. A Stentor could have filled that hall with ease, but I have to remark that I am not a Stentor. However I did all I could, and Stentor himself could not have done more than he could. Now that I am come back I sit

down to recreate myself by writing to you. . . . You will probably be beginning to know by this time how your plan of return will shape itself and when you are likely to be back in Norfolk Square again. Campbell asked us to luncheon on Sunday to meet Williamson, but I was in Folkestone. . . . I shall probably see him soon. . . . I see that there was a horse entered for the Northampton races bearing the name of "The Rebel Rose." I wonder was this a tribute to our re-named masterpiece. I have just corrected and sent off the title-page of "The Ladies' Gallery."[1] What an old-world book it now seems to me to be! I wonder how your work is getting on and whether you will be able to settle down regularly to your literary career when you return home. For myself, I have a vast accumulation of arrears of work—and I do not seem to be making any progress—and living from hand to mouth as I am compelled to do, I can't refuse invitations to do pot-boilers when they come in, and so I turn day after day, and week after week from the work which would perhaps be really profitable in the future to the work which pays something or anything in the present. Well, I suppose it is satisfactory to have any manner of work to do, but one gets impatient sometimes of having to cut oneself up in little slices. I shall be glad when you get back if it were only to have someone to whom one could grumble against fate and who would listen to the grumblings with a kindly sympathetic patience.'

April 18. 'I am going to the House of Commons, dear Colleague. I have a somewhat various day before me. I have already been interviewed by a solicitor with regard to one of my lawsuits.

'I go to attend a meeting of the Western Australian Committee—then to the Committee of Selection—then to a charitable bazaar where a little play of Huntly's is to be performed—then home to swallow a very early dinner, after which I go to preside over a meeting called for the purpose of drawing public attention to the grievances under which the native populations are suffering in India. From that to the House again to take part in a division. Add to all this a dropping fire of letter-writing to all sorts of people and an incessant talk kept up in the House of Commons, and you will

[1] A new edition.

have an idea of how my day goes. You will see that I have not to-day and have not had since Monday one single hour for any work of my own. Never mind. I hope I shall manage to get through somehow, but it becomes a little exasperating sometimes when one sees the days go by and nothing really done that one wants to do. Well, it is pleasant to be able to write a line to you in the midst of it all. Perhaps, if things go as you expect, you will be at home this day week—perhaps about this time I shall be setting out to see you—unless some strange interposition of the Powers above should decree it otherwise. You will be welcome whenever you come.'

CHAPTER XIV

AN INTERLUDE

It is late spring in England when Mr. McCarthy writes to me in London on the day after my arrival:

'Oh my dear Colleague, I was so disappointed to-day not to be able to go and see you! I could have gone at 4.30 if I had had your telegram in time, but did not get it till half-past six—I had been to the House to vote on a bill and had only got home in time to dress for the Shakespeare dinner—an early business—when I got your telegram. I never before felt a grudge against the immortal bard—but I did feel such an emotion to-day because I was by his means cut off from dining with you. It is now past midnight and I have to read a lot of proofs which positively must go off at once. To-morrow—Thursday—I have to be in the law-court to give evidence in the first of my long-pending law-suits which is fixed for hearing. Then I must go to the House and I shall have no chance of seeing you—unless you are free between six and half-past seven when I must be back at the House—for it is one of my leader-writing nights. I am free on Friday after four. Saturday have only engagements that are conditional. Sunday I am dining out. Monday, free, Tuesday I dine out. I give you this scheme of engagements only as a guide. . . . Of course you will have lots of things to do and people to see after your long absence. . . . I am so glad that you are back at home again. . . . Good-night, I have been making speeches about Shakespeare—only think—having to make speeches about Shakespeare! Not much chance to say anything particularl ynew on *that* subject. . . .' April 23, '90.

April 26. 'I write these few lines a little at random for I do not quite know where you are. . . . We fought our first battle about the Irish Exhibition yesterday and the day before, and were *defeated*. The Jury found that Herbert Gladstone, Lord Arthur Hill, Ernest Hart and myself are responsible for *all* the debts of the Exhibition. The Judge, Mr. Justice Mathew, had directed the Jury in the clearest way that we were *not* legally responsible—but the British jury insisted that we were. The Judge refused to " enter judgment " as it is called—which means that he could not himself sanction the verdict, and it will have to go to a higher court and be argued over there ! Our counsel, Robert Reid, a personal friend of mine, who is in the House, told us frankly that if this verdict be maintained we are *personally* liable for every farthing of the debt to the extent of our private fortunes—mine I think is about two-pence-halfpenny. Of course if the Dukes and the rich men stand in with us, things will not be so bad—but will they ? Of course there are shoals of actions to follow this first—which was a small thing in itself—and some of them will be for heavy amounts.

'I hope all this does not seem gloomy to you, but I think you would like to know. I had a very nice and delicate letter from F. M.—the moment he heard of the verdict. . . . I shall certainly accept his counsel and guidance as to the course I had best adopt when the crisis approaches. For it will be a crisis—I have no doubt of that.

'Well, I am not really much troubled. A crisis which brings neither grief nor discredit has not much in it to alarm anyone who is not very easily alarmed. . . . Come, this is getting rather too much into the heroic mood. . . .'

April 27, '90. 'When I got home last night, I found that the extra tickets for the Stanley reception, of which I had given up all hope, had actually come to hand. I enclose them and hope Campbell and you will be able to make use of them. It will be really a very remarkable occasion and it would be a great pity if you were to miss it. So I hope you will go. . . .'

April '90. '. . . I wonder how you got through the evening and whether you could hear Stanley. It was a splendid sight, was it not—regarded merely as a sight ? . . . I am going to deliver a harangue at University College, Gower Street, on Monday evening next at eight on " The Real and the Ideal in

Fiction." Would you care to come with Charlotte and me—if you have nothing better to do? I shall come to you at luncheon-time on Wednesday. . . .'

'Only a line to say that my jury disagreed to-day and had to be discharged. It cannot be tried again for some time and the result is decidedly encouraging for us. If we can succeed in the other case before the higher court, our position will be greatly bettered. Of course, we must lose money anyhow: our own law-costs will be large, but there will be, to me and others, all the difference between quietly paying a couple of hundred pounds or so and being let in for sums that we could not personally meet. Anyhow we gain time, and that is a great deal. Also our position being bettered will make the great dukes and big bankers more inclined to stand in with us.' May 1, '90.

'I went to the House and then I dined out and then I went back to the House and make a speech on the very spur of the moment and I think rather an effective little speech too, and then I came down here and wrote a leading article. . . . *Daily News* Office, May 23.

'Don't forget that we are to dine with you on Sunday and to bring Huntly's play. I want to hear more of your story. I feel the deepest interest in it. Some time we must write a really thrilling story together. How full of material life is—and somehow, the writers of stories miss so much of it. . . .'

The play written by Mr. Justin Huntly McCarthy was a comedietta acted one Sunday evening in my drawing-room by Miss Violet Vanbrugh, Miss Marion Lea, and Mr. Nutcombe Gould. Sunday had been chosen for the convenience of Sir Henry—then Mr. Henry—Irving, who with some other friends, among them one or two theatrical managers, happened to be dining with us that evening. Also, because so many actors and actresses were only free on that evening. It was a very simple, harmless little after-dinner entertainment; the play was charmingly written and much acclaimed. But in those days the Nonconformist conscience was more active than it is now; and our little party, having somehow got into the papers, I was sent various copies of the religious journals, in which were paragraphs holding me up to

condemnation for having desecrated the Sabbath. I suffered indeed, considerably, for the denunciations kept coming back upon me like boomerangs for months afterwards from Australian, New Zealand, and Canadian newspapers.

May 27, '90. 'I seem to have taken to writing to you from the *Daily News*. Now I write chiefly to let you know my movements during the week and to ask you to tell me yours. Friday I am coming to see Campbell at six about Company affairs and shall probably stay and dine.'

June, no date. '. . . I would have written to you even about nothing but that I have been fearfully busy. To-day has been a terrible day of "function"—the wedding function being however deeply interesting and touching.[1] I am so sorry you cannot come on Monday. Sir John Hennessy is coming and John Dillon. Never mind, you will come another time. . . . Thursday I begin by going to a presentation to Cardinal Manning—then to a meeting of our "Economic Printing" Company: then to a meeting of the "Black and White" Company. . . .'

July 4, '90. 'I lay in bed until three o'clock to-day, oppressed and depressed by a terrible cold, which I can't shake off, and now I am going to the "Black and White" meeting, and then to the House. Last night I received notice of an action brought against myself, all alone—for some printing bill—no doubt under the impression that I directed with sole and absolute sway that department of the Exhibition. . . .'

In the summer of 1890, Mr. McCarthy was ordered for his health to the Baths of Royat.

Grand Hotel Continental, Royat, July 18, '90. 'It seems strange to me to be here in this hotel where I so often wrote to you three years ago—three, is it not? I only got here at 7 this evening, for I lingered a night and part of a day at Dover for sheer love of the sea and the cliffs. I shall see Dr. Brandt to-morrow and begin the cure, I presume, the next day. His name is associated with this place in my mind and with the time when you were here. I feel better already for having come here, and I am sure there will be a

[1] The marriage of Mr. William O'Brien to Miss Raffalovich.

cure. I shall do some quiet steady work here—indeed I shall have to, for some of my engagements are rapidly running out. . . .'

'. . . I am doing my daily round of bathing and drinking the waters and "pulverization"—having one's face sprayed upon from a little jet. I rise at half-past six—fancy rising at half-past six! —and I go to bed at 11. I drink at luncheon and dinner one part native red wine to two parts water from the Caesar spring. It is a little like being in a penal settlement but I am sure it will do me good. Thus far, my ill-luck has pursued me—the weather has turned cold and rainy and we cannot see the sky for grey clouds. I did some work last night —the "Portfolio" affair. I find it hard to write much at night by the malign light of the detested *bougies*—and in the day one hates to leave the open air—but still the work has to be done. I feel a good deal like an exile, but it is all very quiet and, I suppose, restful. . . . It grows late and the prison warder will soon order us off to bed—I mean the time is near at hand when I shall feel bound in solemn duty to go to bed.' Royat, July '90.

'. . . Already, even already, I begin to feel wonderfully freer and stronger. I begin to rejuvenesce, if there be such a word. I am rigidly faithful to my regimen. I drink wine drowned in Caesar water at luncheon and dinner—only that and nothing more—absolutely nothing more except the morning tea—and I eat largely. The better I feel, the more I am filled with a consuming desire to be really well again. I am like one who, for a long time plunged in poverty, suddenly finds there is a way to making money and determines that he will be rich. So I feel about health.' Royat, July 22, '90.

'. . . Yesterday I went to call on a man at the Grand Hotel and to my surprise was greeted by the concierge with a beaming smile and "How do you do, Mr. McCarthy?" His face was familiar to me, but I could not remember where I had seen him until he told me he was at the "Californie Hotel" in Cannes when I was there. Then I remembered his handsome, rather delicate face at the "Californie." Royat, July '90.

'. . . I am sending this to your "Rectory" although I am not quite certain from your letter whether you were to go last Thursday or next Thursday. This must be a short letter for it grows late. . . . All the bathing and drinking and

spraying—all the enforced lying down without permission to do anything but sleep—if I can—all this swallows up one's day. And then I have a lot of copy to be shovelled off within a given date. . . .

'And so the season is dead and buried and we shall not be on the Terrace for months to come. And when shall we work together again, I wonder? . . .

'I understand the love for rushing round in London—for driving fast—for rapid movement of any kind. Here, we have only quietude, but, after the season, it is a refreshing change in many ways. And I am getting so much better. I feel somewhat as a worn-out tree might feel when suddenly filled with the spring sensation of sap rushing into the stem and branches again. How long will this prevail against the London winter! I don't know. . . . I fancy now that I was in much worse condition in London than I then believed and that Roose was right—and you were right.

'Tell me all about your "Rectory" [1]—and whether the quietude will really suit you after the crowds and "tearing round." I hope so. I am very glad that you have positively set yourself the task of a three-volume novel to be finished by December. Is that the plot we have sometimes talked over? I hope to go and see you at the Rectory and perhaps to be able to help you with some ideas for your novel. . . .

'. . . Did I tell you that we went up the Puy de Dome? All the steep mountainous part, we were dragged up by a mule cart—and Charlotte and I walked down. Think of that! Am I getting strong?'

Royat, Aug. 2, '90.

'. . . There is nothing much to report from this region. I keep on drinking the waters and taking baths and keeping with rigorous fidelity to my regimen—and I grow better every day. I have lost all sensation of such a thing as nerves—don't know what has become of them. . . . Of course, I have to look out for the London winter and the winter Session and the work and the worry—including the inevitable Irish Exhibition troubles which must, I suppose, come to a crisis this year. We have an idea of going on the river when we return—getting a cottage there and making it our headquarters for

[1] Chester House having long been given up, we had taken for these summer months the Rectory at Rushden in Northamptonshire, among all our old haunts.

the rest of August and the whole of September. . . . I have to go on a visit to the Mellors at Taunton and I want to visit your "Rectory." I seem to have been living here for ages. I feel like the oldest inhabitant. I feel as if I were turned into a different man from the man who came here a fortnight ago. Is it not odd? I can't explain it. Observe that this is only physical. Otherwise, I am still the same and still rack my brains about this, that and the other thing. . . .'

'. . . After some gloriously hot and sunny weather, we have a rain-pour worthy of Algiers. On the whole I like this place much. Its hills and its broad plain are so picturesque. . . . I have written a few lines giving my idea of your hero's letter. You can do the woman's reply better than I could. I am glad you are not beginning your more serious book yet. It could not be dashed off in a hurry. Royat, Aug. '90.

'The work I am doing here is the completion of the London articles for Seeley and a long and very dry article on Ireland for a Review called *Subjects of the Day*—a new affair. I shan't be able to get to my short sensation story for some time yet, but it must be given in by October. . . . I think you are quite heroic in your resolve to finish your three volumes in January: I shall not abuse the privileges of friendship—even such friendship as ours—by idle and futile admonitions "well-meant alms of breath," perhaps I may be able to give you a helping hand. . . .'

'. . . I only write a few lines to say that we leave tomorrow. We were rummaging about an old shop at Clermont the other day and I came on a nice little silver cup of Louis the Fifteenth's time. Huntly vouches for its genuineness. I am bringing it to you. I have sent M—— some preserved Auvergnat fruits.' Aug. 10, '90.

'. . . Were you not sorry for the death of John Boyle O'Reilly—our chivalrous Exile? We were standing under a doorway from the rain yesterday—and, to beguile time, we bought a paper and read the deaths of Cardinal Newman and John Boyle O'Reilly. I own that I was more touched by O'Reilly's death. The great Cardinal's time had come: he had already ceased to live. But our vigorous and brilliant Boyle O'Reilly! I never knew a man in whom I saw so much of the charm of perfect manhood—and he was so sympathetic.' Paris, Aug. 12, '90.

London, Aug., '90. ' You will see that I am settled in the old quarters again and working at the old machine. . . . I am so sorry that I can't accept your invitation, I should have liked of all things to go to you on Saturday, but I cannot. For one reason I have been engaged a long time to go to the last night of the Daly Company—and I have a dinner engagement for Sunday, and when I got home last night, I found a telegram from Carew begging me mysteriously to come to the House as soon as I got back to town and to give up these two or three closing days to the House for reasons which he will explain. I am sure there is some good reason—for he is very obliging and not at all a fussy "whip." . . .'

Aug., '90. '. . . It turns out that what Carew wanted me for in his mysteriously worded telegram—worded with purposed mystery—was not about parliamentary but personal affairs—an urgent appeal from Lord Arthur Hill to get at me about the Irish Exhibition and some suggested compromise by which the whole matter may be settled on our paying seventy-five per cent. of these claims—seventy-five per cent of over ten thousand pounds at least! I need not tell you that unless all the other men agree to stand in—the Dukes and Marquesses and so on—I could not possibly pay my share, even of the ten thousand pounds reduced. . . .

' I should so like to have gone to Chester House. Can't we go there when I *do* go down to see you. . . . So you dreamed of my being drowned! Well, the collapse of the Parnell Commission has spoiled the baleful omen—do you remember the Shakespearean suggestion "I'll warrant *him* against drowning though the ship were no stronger than a nutshell." . . .'

London, Aug. 22, '90. '. . . I am not certain whether this will find you at Mr. Mirehouse's. . . . No one is in town. . . .

' My sensation story must perforce begin very soon. I have thought of an idea—a wild idea about a rich man captured by robbers in the heart of London itself, and carried off and held at ransom. It is an old notion of mine, as a possibility both of life and of romance—then being rescued in some marvellous way by his daughter's lover with the daughter's help. Do you think there is anything in this? I should be glad if you would tell me. I have had to put off my visit to the West because I must absolutely get some of my work done. Other visits I shall try to put off into the blue immensity of the future. I hope to be free of actual

engagements in September and could go and see you at any time that would suit. . . .

'. . . I hope Mr. Mirehouse will not shake your nerves by any more too startling drives. I do not at all like the mad drive with the four-team horses at the furious speed up the hill.'

'. . . I am feeling immensely well. Perhaps I am hallooing before I am out of the wood, but I certainly do feel at present wonderfully well and strong—and—don't smile—young—yes, young. Only think of it, at my time of life! I have lost all sense of that distressing nervousness which lately was becoming so troublesome. This renewed health has brought me an odd blending of sensation—a keen renewed sense of enjoyment in life and an absolute indifference to any chance of life's coming to an end. I wonder if I can explain myself. I mean that I *do* enjoy life now as I did not three months ago and at the same time I don't believe that I should turn a hair on my own account if I were told that I must die to-morrow. Riddle me that, dear friend, if you can—I can't, I can only record for your benefit the actual sensation. I think the indifferentism comes perhaps from increased strength of nerves to look at the actual realities of life and see what they are personally worth or likely to be worth to one, and taking life accordingly—to get the best one can out of it and not care two-pence about it. I don't really know, but I find the condition of nerves agreeable on the whole. Taplow, Aug. '90.

'I have just finished my Seeley work and shall send it off to-day. I shall then get rid of an article and go at my short sensation story for which by the way I got a good idea to-day. After that comes the long sensation story—and after that the Deluge. I have been thinking seriously over the American and Australian trips and, so far, I do not see anything better or indeed anything else—except of course this kind of hand to mouth existence by writing odd articles and novels and histories—a sort of work which would certainly begin to grow more and more irksome year after year. Just now I have a wonderful return of strength and feel as if I could go anywhere and do anything. Why not try to keep this up until next year and do this long projected trip and try and make enough money—not indeed to live on, but to help me to do without pot-boiler work? Of course, when we have a Liberal Ministry and a Home Rule Parliament in Ireland I might be offered

office here or there—but would it suit me? Or I might be offered some foreign or colonial appointment from a Liberal Government but would it suit me not to be independent? Well, it is rather soon to think about all this as yet—and to expect you to take thought about it.

'What a dissertation about my personal affairs and projects! You see how I count upon your good nature and interest, your sympathy, when I trouble you with such talk and expect you to pay attention to it. So there! I have discoursed to you all about myself—and about schemes which any accident, any breath may lay in the dust and reduce to nothing. . . . I left the river with a sort of pang to-day. Everything was looking delightful under the benignant sun. . . . I have been thinking of drawing someone in a novel who by accident of some kind had turned for a while into a complete dreamer—one who lived in dreams alone—who went through his daily toil in a sort of dream, living a life totally apart from his actual existence—and at last recalled to reality by some sudden shock. How would this do for my Tichborne man?[1] Could it not be made to explain his long silence and the whole of his oddity of manner and action?'

Taplow, Sept. '90. '. . . An idea has occurred to me. You and Campbell are coming to town on Saturday for the Lyceum. . . . So am I. You will probably not return to Rushden on the Sunday. Will you both come down and dine with us here? It is a very short run and the station is at your very door. We could have a little dinner at Skindle's or some nice place, preceded by afternoon tea in our own stately and palatial abode—and we could go on the river if it were fine. I would call for you at Norfolk Square and pilot you down. Come, if you have nothing better to do. . . .'

Sept. '90. 'My short sensation story is deadly dull. I simply detest it—it is wooden—worse than wooden—it is leaden. . . . Speaking of fiction I have had a long letter from an Englishman in Shanghai, challenging the correctness of a passage in "The Ladies' Gallery" in which the Speaker calls on *Ransom* by name. Our Shanghai friend has got it into his head that the rule about not calling a member by his name applies to Mr. Speaker. It is however a very nice appreciative letter and I shall of course reply to it. . . .'

[1] The suggested hero in Mr. McCarthy's new novel.

'. . . I am so sorry I could not come to your place to-morrow. I have a lot of things to do—and if I could leave the neighbourhood of London, I should have to go to the annual Convention of the National League of Great Britain which is to open at Edinburgh on Saturday—to-morrow—and will last over Monday. I ought to go there if it were only to propose the vote of national regret for the death of poor Boyle O'Reilly—but I can't possibly give the time just now. I don't suppose you would remember the fact that there was a meeting of the Convention in Manchester at this time last year—I remember that I was helping you a little with "Countess Adrian" at the time and that I wrote some slips on the Sunday between one meeting and another. I shall be delighted to go on Saturday week and stay until Monday. I shall not let anything interfere with that engagement—except alone the talked-of meeting of the Irish Parliamentary party which the papers say Parnell is about to call in Dublin on the Monday following. As you would easily understand I should have to give up any personal engagement for that meeting. . . .' Sept. 26, '90.

'I am grappling with my "sensation story"—it must be off on Monday! It is not the least in the world in my style and I know you would not like it. I should be disappointed if you did. . . . Sept.' 30, '90.

'The news from Ireland is very serious as you will have seen. We certainly ought to have our meeting as soon as possible and decide as to our course and let the people see that we are taking some thought as a party about them. . . .'

'I am very glad about the notice in the *Figaro*.[1] . . . Were you not sorry to hear of the death of Sir Richard Burton? I was—very, very sorry. We looked forward to meeting him in London this coming season. I had known him off and on for twenty years and more. Of late years I used to meet him at Dr. Bird's house whenever he came to London. He was, taken for all and all, one of the most remarkable men of our time.' Oct. 90.

'I am crossing to Ireland to-night. I did not go last night, partly because I received a letter which gave me occasion to stop and think over things. The letter was from Parnell and entirely in his own handwriting. For some reason which he says he will explain to me privately, but which he does not Cheyne Gardens, Oct. 5, '90.

[1] A critique upon our collaboration work.

explain now, he cannot attend the meeting in Dublin and he asks me to preside in his absence and to see that his views—which as he knows are my views too—are carried out. Now of course on an ordinary occasion this would be nothing. I have been called on to preside scores of times on a moment's notice in Parnell's sudden absence. But just now the whole country—I mean the political part of the country—is waiting to hear what Parnell will say—and I shall have to get up and try to reconcile my own party to the fact that he is not going to say anything—and to give the world no information as to why he is not there. My dear Colleague, there are occasions when one's loyalty is tried and this is one of them. I must only go—and make the best of it. . . .'

Oct. 8, '90. '. . . I have not heard from Parnell since. The meeting went off very well, so far as our men and our public were concerned. They are all singularly loyal and trusting. They asked no questions, assumed that it was all right—all carefully considered—all for the best. I know nothing as yet. It may be ill-health kept concealed—it may be some understanding with Hawarden—I do not know, but I am sure there must be some good reason—only of course, the results are unfortunate, for the enemy are making enormous capital out of his absence from such a meeting—at such a time. One of the Tory papers in Dublin spoke of Mr. Parnell resigning his post to a London novelist who probably knows quite as much of Pomerania as he does of Ireland! Another paper asks why John Morley was not present, observing that he had as good a title as Mr. Justin McCarthy, both being literary gentlemen from London who at an advanced period of their career, had assumed an interest in Irish affairs. This sort of thing of course is only amusing, but there were much more serious attacks on the policy of absence.'[1]

[1] I confess that Mr. Parnell's defection upon this occasion made me very indignant, knowing, as I did, how sorely taxed were my literary colleague's health and time. Looking over my own letters, I find myself writing to Mr. McCarthy:

'I feel very angry about the Dublin business. . . . Parnell knows the man with whom he has to deal. Truly if your most malignant enemy were to appeal to your loyalty—always supposing that you have such an enemy—he would be very safe. . . I am curious to know what reason Parnell gives for failing you. Ah! I wish you were out of it all. I wish it for the sake of the work you might do, and for the years by which your life would certainly be lengthened.

'I shall hold Wednesday for Rushden unless some cataclysm comes to upset the arrangements. I do not believe there is any immediate prospect of an appeal to the country. I wish there were, but I do not see why the Government should anticipate matters, especially when so many of their Liberal-Unionist supporters are certain never to come in again after the next election. The only chance is that if they had a very good Budget they might dissolve on that in the spring. At present things are looking very well for us. . . . I have to do a short Christmas story for a Catholic and Irish paper to which I have contributed a little tale each Christmas these several years back—not for the gain—they can only pay five pounds! —but because some of my poorer Catholic countrymen in these big English cities like to see my name.

London, Oct. 10, '90.

'I am going to a meeting in Bermondsey to-night where I have to take the chair. It you should feel inspired to write to me, address care of Right Hon. John W. Mellor, Q.C., Culm Head, Taunton.'

'I think I wrote to you before from this same place some two years ago, or thereabouts. It is a lovely place—a great height overlooking a vast plain dotted with villages and orchards—Sedgemoor on one side, Exmoor the other. And such lovely weather! such glowing sun and soft blue sky—we have been sitting for hours in the open air. Oddly enough, I have met here a very pretty young woman—the newly married daughter-in-law of my host, who is an Australian, from Brisbane. She has not been there since she was a child, but she knows all about you and your father and was greatly interested in me because I had written books with you. . . .

Culm Head, Taunton, Oct. 12, '90.

'Chatto clamours for another volume of the *Georges* in the early spring. He says I must put aside all else for that. But I can't put aside my Tillotson novel—that must be done first. So I have work to do—and Parliament meeting in November!

'I have had a very nice invitation from Lord Coleridge who lives not far from here to spend a day or two with him. Of course I can't go. I must be in town on Tuesday.'

'. . . I have been waiting in all day expecting a telegram from the Law Courts—and here it is at last—from our solicitor. "We have won Coutts's action. . . . Letter by post." I did not expect this—it is a great piece of news for us, even if the other side should appeal. I thought you would be glad to hear it.

London, Oct. 28, '90. Half-past four o'clock.

It would change the whole aspect of affairs. Happily, I wrote last night a letter of thanks to Robert Reid, our chief counsel, for his splendid services—much more friend than mere counsel—which would reach him *before* victory. It would be worth little coming after. Any creature would thank the general who *wins*.

'It does not affect me much. I should have taken defeat with composure. I take success in just the same way. Meanwhile I have written out for you my ideas of what your hero would probably feel under the conditions you described. It is only a rough notion, but I fancy I could understand a man's feeling better than you could.'

London, Nov. 12, '90.

'Do you remember—you don't, I am sure—that this day twelve month I went to say goodbye to you as you were leaving for Cannes? It is curious—I have in all the ordinary things of life no memory whatever—no, none whatever for figures and dates. But for anniversaries into which anything of feeling and affection enters, I have an unfailing recollection. So my memory is a little storehouse or treasure-chamber of anniversaries—fasts and festivals of the heart and soul—all more or less melancholy, for even the anniversary of happiness becomes a melancholy retrospect by the mere fact that it is a retrospect. And then most of our anniversaries are not the festivals of purely happy memories. . . . So trivial are some of these pressing anniversaries! Among them is a recollection of an evening when I heard a girl sing a song which gave me a quite unexpected pleasure and made the world bright for a few minutes. Poor girl—she had lately got married and her husband soon after their marriage got some fearful attack which for the time deprived him of his senses. I believe he has not yet recovered them—and this is the first year of her married life! What cheerful reminiscences!

'. . . I am glad to say we *are* going to Mrs. Gabrielli's dinner on the 30th. . . . Saturday we are dining out at Mrs. Joshua's. Sunday I shall have to dine at some fearful hour, for I am pledged to give a lecture at the Sunday Evening Association in Newman Street and I think it begins at seven. I have given a lecture there for several years—not for pay but for the sake of helping to do something to find people an amusement on the Sunday evening. I am going to talk about "famous people I have met."'

CHAPTER XV

THE PARNELL TRAGEDY

The story of the Parnell tragedy, in its relation to the withdrawal of Mr. Gladstone's support from the Irish leader, has been told by Lord Morley in his 'Life of Gladstone' with such detail and dramatic force, that I feel it would be presumptuous to attempt explanatory comment here. It is interesting, however, to find my own memoranda of conversations with Mr McCarthy, as well as his letters at that time, when he was the intermediary between the Irish Party and the Liberal Cabinet, in absolute accordance with Lord Morley's notes.

In November of 1890 the tragedy was approaching its culminating point, and the condition of affairs brought great depression of spirits to Justin McCarthy. He writes to me:

London, Nov. 16, '90.

'I am ever so much troubled about this Parnell case—and am out of sorts and dismal—and the day is dark. . . . I do not know how this case may affect our party—how it may for the present affect our leadership. I think we ought to do nothing and take no notice—simply go on as we are constantly doing in Parnell's absence—not make any even temporary change in the leadership—not take the public into our confidence at all—go on and say nothing as a party about the whole matter. It will all soon blow over. There is nothing in it particularly heinous. He was a very young man when it began . . . she was considerably older than he,

even in mere years. . . . I heard from him only three days ago—a letter about the forthcoming election for which I wanted to put forward Pope Hennessy, and Parnell wrote to me—a letter all in his own handwriting—entirely accepting my views and not saying one single word about the divorce-case. I am very sorry about him. To begin with, he is an *incomparable* leader, and he could keep the party together. If there is any talk about a new leader, we shall fall into hopeless discord. Personally, he and I were in complete general agreement. We both held to what I may call the moderate—almost the conservative, views of Irish politics—of course I don't mean conservative in the English partisan sense—and then I had and have a very warm and personal liking for him. He has a singular magnanimity of nature and character—and you have heard me say that magnanimity of character has a charm for me which makes me forget all faults. He is absolutely free from vanity or meanness or jealousy or smallness of any kind. Well, it may come out better than one looks for just now—but meantime it troubles us all here a great deal.'

The following letter was written at the time of the meeting of the National League in Dublin, after the pronouncement had been made in the Parnell-O'Shea divorce case, when a resolution was passed pledging the meeting to stand by Parnell as leader of the Irish Party.

Dublin, Nov. 21, '90.

'We have had our meeting—and it has gone well outwardly, but there are terrible difficulties underneath, and a time of crisis is before us—as if we had not had enough crisis before this! However I will tell of all that when I see you. I can't write more than a line now. I am surrounded by people, as you will easily imagine, and have no end of things to settle. I am writing this in the National League room, where I wrote to you years ago—and for the moment I seem back to that time again. I shall leave Dublin to-night. . . .'

Cheyne Gardens, Sunday Night.

'Labouchere called on me to day at about three o'clock—said he was sent by Harcourt and John Morley to see about what could be done. He and they think that Parnell should give up the leadership for the time, and they wanted to know whether a letter of advice from Gladstone would have the

effect if it could be got to Parnell in time. I could only say that I am perfectly sure a letter from Gladstone would have more effect on Parnell than a million of letters from the world in general. All I could do to help Labouchere to get at him was to give him the address of the club to which Parnell's secretary belongs. I do not know whether the secretary will be able to get at Parnell, but if he cannot nobody else can. I should think he will be able to reach Parnell in time to make Gladstone's opinions known. We have only until two o'clock on Tuesday. Labouchere started off on his quest and said he would try and see me again to-night late. I explained to him that we, the Irish party, cannot throw Parnell over—but that if the wish to withdraw for the present should come from him, that would be quite a different thing. I have seen other men too to-day—Herbert Paul among the rest—who called on me about this business and who are all of opinion that if something be not promptly done, the Liberal party will be crushed at any near election.

'I have passed a dreary day. This thing of course is on my mind. Everything in life begins to wear a horribly unreal and uncertain appearance. I rather dread Tuesday. It seems so ghastly a thing that the cause of a whole people should be involved in this love-affair. I begin to envy the purely literary people, the purely theatrical people, the painters, the sculptors who have nothing to think about but their own concerns—and have no fear of catastrophes like this, with which they have nothing to do and over which they have no manner of control.—Well, one ought not to keep on quarrelling with Fate in this sort of way.

'If I hear anything interesting, I will write to you to-morrow. I began to-day a short Christmas story for the *Weekly Dispatch* and I leave you to think in what mood I was for a bright Christmas story!

'I have had a letter from Lady Russell, written after she had heard of the decision of the Dublin meeting and my part in it—written in fear lest I should possibly think that I could be misunderstood in any course I took, by her and other English friends. Her letter is very sweet and kind—it is a pleasure to have such friends at such a time.'

Mr. McCarthy's account of his critical interview with

Mr. Gladstone in relation to the Parnell-O'Shea divorce case, reached me at Market Harborough where I was staying for a race-meeting with Mr. and Mrs. Edward Kennard.

Cheyne Gardens, Monday night.

'I hope this will reach you before you leave Mrs. Kennard's. I have had a busy and troublous day of it and have been seeing people and hearing from people all the time. One important thing is that I have seen Gladstone. He sent for me immediately on his coming to town and I went and had a long talk with him. He spoke with chivalrous consideration of Parnell's "splendid and altogether unrivalled services to Ireland," but told me very sadly that his remaining in the leadership now means the loss of the next elections and the putting off of Home Rule until a time when he (Gladstone) will no longer be able to bear a hand in the great struggle to which he has devoted the later years of his life. He spoke with intense feeling and earnestness. He said he would not write thus to Parnell himself, because it might seem harsh and dictatorial and might hurt Irish feeling: but he authorized me to convey his views to Parnell when I see him. This will not be until to-morrow—if he comes to the House—and all depends upon to-morrow. It was a momentous interview—well-nigh tragic in its tone. It touched me deeply. I have written to Parnell asking him to decide nothing as to himself until he sees me in the House, and have sent the letter to the House this evening on the off-chance of his going or sending there early to-morrow. . . . I am much perturbed—all depends upon to-morrow. . . .'

London, Nov. 25, '90.

'We have had a troubled day and I am weary and it is late. We have new complications. Gladstone threatens to resign if Parnell will not—this came out to-night. Our party is torn with dissension, and half are in revolt and we are to have another meeting to-morrow . . . and oh, it is confusion worse confounded!

'I will call to-morrow, if I can, and tell you—only it is a shame to oppress you with my political troubles.'

'The confusion worse confounded' had arisen mainly out of a misapprehension on the part of the intermediaries between the two parties—Justin McCarthy and Mr. John

Morley—concerning a letter written by Mr. Gladstone to Mr. Morley repudiating Parnell's leadership. The letter had been written immediately after Mr. McCarthy's interview with Mr. Gladstone, before the opening of Parliament and meeting of the Nationalist members to re-elect Parnell as their sessional chairman; and it was assumed that Mr. McCarthy had been made acquainted with its contents.

The letter, published in a special edition of the *Pall Mall Gazette* that evening, brought about a storm in the Press, and still further misunderstanding of Mr. McCarthy's attitude.

He telegraphs to me the following day:

'*Sorry can't go to-day. Pall Mall utterly wrong. Am going thoroughly with Gladstone.*'

Later, talking over the situation, I asked Mr. McCarthy why he had not told Parnell the substance of Mr. Gladstone's letter to Mr. John Morley, and he replied:

'Because I did not know of it. I was under the impression when I left Mr. Gladstone that, though he disapproved of Parnell, he would still fight for our cause. By some extraordinary misapprehension, Morley did not tell me of the letter, though he had it in his pocket when we met before the Nationalist meeting. I can only conclude that he thought I knew of it when he said to me "I suppose you are quite aware of Mr. Gladstone's views?" and I answered "Oh yes," thinking he referred to my conversation with Mr. Gladstone.'

He writes me from Cheyne Gardens:

'. . . I have not had a moment to spare and have been attending meetings of the party and private conferences and having interviews and I know not what, until my brain rather reels, and I think the snow and the bad weather add to the trouble. I had a long private talk with Parnell last evening. I found him very friendly, sweet and affectionate to me—but determined to issue a manifesto to the Irish people against some of his own colleagues and against Gladstone, who he

Friday night, Nov. 28, '90.

says is determined to betray Home Rule and Ireland. With much trouble I succeeded in getting him to postpone this extraordinary manifesto for twenty-four hours until I could see Gladstone and some other people. I wrote to Mr. Gladstone and asked an interview privately—and this was all on my *Daily News* night when I had an article to write! To-day I had two interviews with Gladstone, and he gave me the most satisfactory assurances and authorised me to make use of them in his name. But—only think of it!—I shall have to make use of them against Parnell—against my dear old friend—and I *must*, if need be, I must make use of them as a reason why we should stand by Gladstone and let Parnell go—even urge him to go. Some of the party are wild against Parnell and will not listen to reason: some are wild for him and will not listen to a word of reason. And in his absence I have to preside at the meetings—meetings all aflame with passion this way and that—you can imagine what such a crisis would be—and with Celtic devotion and Celtic emotion awakened on either side to the seething point of passion. Well, the outcome of the whole will be at the meeting of the party on Monday, when it must be settled whether Parnell is to carry his leadership or not. I shall have to vote against him—unless some utterly unknown revelations come about—and do think what it is to me to vote for the dethroning of Parnell, for whom I have had so much public devotion and private friendship! The last words he said to me last night were: "Well, happen what will, you and I are always friends—God bless you, my dear old friend."

'I shall not be likely to forget these days—or the still more trying days that are to come. And all the while, I am receiving sheaves of telegrams and shoals of letters—everybody in the world whose opinion is worth absolutely nothing writing long, spontaneous letters for my guidance and instruction.

'I think I had better come to-morrow—Saturday—to luncheon. But heaven knows what telegrams or summonses I may receive between that hour and this. I shall, however, come some time to-morrow, for the House of course is not sitting.'

Describing the scene when Parnell was making out his

famous manifesto, Mr. McCarthy told me how one of the members present suggested that there should be a flourish at the end about all he—Parnell—had done for Ireland.

Parnell said wearily : ' Oh, I'm not good at that sort of thing. Let Leamy finish it.' A quotation was suggested, and Mr. McCarthy said, in sad irony, ' You can't do better than take Grattan's saying about the Irish Parliament—" I watched over its cradle ; I am following its hearse." ' Parnell answered gently : ' No, we won't say that, Justin.'

The following day Mr. McCarthy sought an interview with Mr. Gladstone, who at once asked, touching on Parnell's accusation that he (Mr. Gladstone) had, even at the time of the Hawarden interviews, meant to betray Ireland.

' And why did not Mr. Parnell tell his colleagues of my malignant purpose ? ' Mr. Gladstone stated that Parnell was in error upon certain points contained in the manifesto, on which Parnell declared that he had received definite assurances from Mr. Gladstone. Mr. Gladstone said now that he should like to make clear in writing these particular points, and Mr. McCarthy began to write. Mr. Gladstone stopped him, saying, ' Perhaps I had better write them,' and did so on two sheets of notepaper which he gave Mr. McCarthy, empowering him to make use of them. Afterwards, he withdrew them, saying he would like to consult two of his colleagues and that he would see Mr. McCarthy again in the afternoon.

At the House of Commons, the Liberal Whip came up to Mr. McCarthy and said :

' Mr. Gladstone says he must watch this debate and will let you know later : he says you will understand.'

Later, Mr. Gladstone sent for Mr. McCarthy to his room, telling him that his colleagues were in agreement with him, gave Justin the document, bidding him have it copied, as he

preferred to keep the original. This was done, and the original returned to Mr. Gladstone.

That night Mr. Redmond came to Mr. McCarthy's house and took him to a house near Eccleston Square to see Parnell, who was there with some of his partisans.

Mr. McCarthy told Parnell of Gladstone's contradictions, and asked Parnell why, if he, a year ago, after the Hawarden meeting, had known that Gladstone was going to betray Ireland, he had not said so, but had allowed his party to go about declaring they were in agreement with Gladstone ?

Parnell answered: 'That would have been a breach of confidence, and, besides, I wished to make what use I could of the Liberal Party.' He was quiet in outward manner, but it was clear that inwardly he was greatly excited.

Then Mr. McCarthy told Parnell that at the meeting of the party he would have to side with Gladstone and vote against the leader. He asked Parnell, 'And what will happen if you are deposed ?'

Parnell answered :

'I will fight you everywhere. I will go to Cork and be re-elected. I will oppose you wherever you are put up. I have the money, and its control is vested in my name.'

'And in mine,' said Mr. McCarthy.

'Yes, but it is I who have the power,' Parnell replied.

'Do you not know,' said Mr McCarthy, 'that this will mean something like civil war in Ireland ?'

Parnell answered :

'I am the chosen representative of the Irish people and by them I will abide.'

The publication of Parnell's manifesto brought the tension of feeling to an acute point. The Church now took part in the struggle. Cardinal Manning's active sympathy had always been with the Irish Cause. Dr. Walsh telegraphed from Ireland ; Dr. Croke, Archbishop of Cashel, did so more

emphatically, urging 'in God's name' that Parnell should be induced to retire. Parnell, in conciliatory mood, begged Justin McCarthy to telegraph to the Catholic Bishops asking them to withhold their proclamation against him while the meeting of the Irish Party lasted; and also to *United Ireland* requesting that paper not to print anything disgraceful of him. Mr. McCarthy agreed to the last, not to the first request.

On Monday, December 1, began the meeting of the Nationalist Party for the re-election or deposition of Parnell.

The scene of the drama was now shifted to a smaller stage, of fiercer and more concentrated action. The political interest on all sides and parties—indeed the acute human interest in the whole miserable situation—centred during the following days in Committee Room Number Fifteen, where the 'Uncrowned King,' as Parnell had been styled—with his little band of devotees, was fighting inch by inch for the place and power lost for love of a woman.

The battle-ground has become historic. I well remember how eagerly the morning and evening papers were scanned for reports of that grim strife—how anxiously I myself watched for the notes and telegrams my literary colleague sent me from the scene of the fight.

House of Commons.

'December the second, dear colleague, the date of a great *coup d'état*. I do not know if we shall not have a *coup d'état* to-day. Parnell—I am sitting next him as I write this—will probably defy us when we make our decision, and will fight us in the country—and then no one can tell how it will end. Passion on both sides is growing more heated hour by hour. This is our second day of debate, and I do not know whether we shall take our real division to-day. I don't suppose there is the least chance of my being able to leave this House to-day. I think I am free to-morrow evening—Wednesday—if this is over by that time, and if we have not

to hold a sort of permanent committee for the present—but truly, I don't know what may or may not happen for the next few days. . . . I am weary of all this hot debate, the very condition of which will only prelude the opening of a new, vague, and portentous chapter.'

Thursday night. '. . . We divided this night but only on an amendment to adjourn the whole debate to Dublin—and there were forty-four votes *against* the adjournment, and twenty-nine *for* it—a defeat for Parnell's followers by fifteen. This is not a large majority, and it will give him fresh courage. To-morrow we shall take up a more serious amendment and shall be better able then to judge how things will go. The very worst that could happen, it seems to me, is that we should win by a narrow majority. That would leave things terribly doubtful. Well—a day or two will settle our part of the business. We have been holding a regular Irish parliament in a big room upstairs—and the Imperial Parliament going on drowsily below—and all interests concentrated in *our* Parliament and nobody even among the Englishmen caring a straw what is going on in the other. Parnell is much more quiet and composed to-day. . . . It is all very sad but I am not going to groan over it.'

Daily News Office, Thursday night. 'Oh! my dear colleague, what an anxious time we are having! I am about to write immediately after this to Gladstone, asking him to see me some time to-morrow—a stroke off my own bat in consequence of a long secret conference with Parnell this evening late. I have not been at home all day and have not received any letter from you, I have not seen you for days.'

Dec. 4, '90. 'I have just come home after a day of storm—and then sudden, and, I fear, treacherous quietude. After a fierce debate, Parnell suddenly declared that if we could get satisfactory assurances formally from Gladstone, he would at once resign. This, I fear, is only to gain time and in the hope that Gladstone may refuse and thus give him ground for saying that Gladstone is betraying us. But we had to accept the offered compromise: and now we are trying to get Gladstone to receive a formal delegation from the party. If he will frankly tell them what he told me privately, we are safe, and Parnell must go out: but if he declines and is too reticent, Parnell will be immensely strengthened. I am going to try

to see Lord Spencer early to-morrow, and on my own account —and endeavour to get him to influence Gladstone. *Our* Parliament meets again at 12 to-morrow.'

But Mr. Gladstone was firm in declining to give these assurances or to have further parleying with Parnell through any intermediary. 'As an English statesman,' he said, 'I can only treat with the leader of the party. I recognise your party, I recognise the Irish Cause—that is my care. I will offer no Home Rule Bill that is not acceptable to the Irish people. Mr. Parnell is still their leader. I cannot deal with him, but I can deal with no one else.'

Mr. McCarthy answered :

'I think I may say, Mr. Gladstone, that I represent the majority of the party.'

Mr. Gladstone said he did not doubt that, but what assurance would he and his colleagues have that Parnell would not repudiate the mission and would not publish his (Mr. Gladstone's) letter ?

Sir William Harcourt was equally firm. They cited the Carnarvon episode and Parnell's disclosure in the House of Commons of those secret negotiations.

It was clear that the Irish Cause had received a blow from which one might well doubt that it would ever recover. There was a certain grim humour in Mr. Gladstone's remark to my literary colleague.

'I cannot expect of Providence with any confidence—I may say with any decency—that my life will be spared eight, nine, or ten years for the furtherance of Home Rule.'

From hour to hour, the temper of the combatants varied. At times Parnell was violent, ruling imperiously but without the dignity of former years. Then again, he would appear calm and comparatively reasonable, listening quietly to the attacks made upon him by his former followers. Once, when one of them had made a merciless speech,

Parnell turned to Mr. McCarthy who was sitting beside him, and remarked 'That's plain speaking.' Sometimes he made jokes in a suave manner on the future leadership and would chaff his old friend. 'Now listen, Justin, this concerns you, not me. I tell you, you'll have some trouble to keep the boys in order'. . . . And again, 'Now mind, you'll have to look sharp after that Grand Old Man!'

But if Parnell, baited and with his back to the wall, suffered in that fight, the foremost of his opponents suffered as much or more. Perhaps I knew better than most what it cost Justin McCarthy, compelled by duty, to turn against the chief whom he had so devotedly served. And perhaps he understood better than most the mixture of anger, irony, and wounded affection in the breasts of those other men who for twelve years had followed Parnell in blind faith, to find, with the goal in sight, that their trusted leader had 'in fearful levity'—to quote one of his own arraigners—'brought them—into the Divorce Court!'

There is no date to this bulletin:

20 Cheyne Gardens.

'I have just come home, dearest colleague—we debated at our meeting till after midnight, and it is now two o'clock and I want to send you just a line before the post goes, to say that we have had a *hideous* day and were bewildered by all manner of scenes which I could not stop to tell you of, but of which I will give you an account when we meet. Our debate at our meeting goes on again to-morrow, and I don't know when it will finish. . . . Parnell is certain to be deposed—and he is wild—quite beside himself—and the few who cling to him are even wilder than he. . . .'

At the close of the fifth day, Mr. McCarthy writes:

Dec. 5, '90.

'Friday night—no, Saturday morning. House of Commons. Half-past two! I must send you a line. Yes—"I do praise thee to-day!" Now nice and sweet of you to do that work for me. I am sure it will be better than I could do. We

have had a busy day. The Liberals—the late Cabinet—have had a meeting and promise *us* all good things, but will not treat with Parnell, and I think he now feels that he must go. We had a conference with him to-night, and I think he is yielding. We met at twelve this day—Saturday—I hope for the last time. . . . I will wire you from the House—I dine with the Lillys. Tell me what you are doing on Sunday. I am tired of our sittings and our strife. I shall be so glad to get back to a quiet breath of literature and a quiet stroke of literary work again. It is so good of you just now to relieve me of my story. I am sure what you make of it will be the right thing. This whole business makes me feel dazed. . . .'

Saturday, December 6, saw the end of that miserable act in Fifteen Committee Room. The curtain fell on the withdrawal of Justin McCarthy and his forty-four colleagues, leaving the beaten chief and his minority of twenty-six followers.

I see in my notes of that time that Mr. McCarthy lunched at our house on Sunday, the day after the deposition of Parnell. We had been reading the sensational accounts in the papers of the 'Exit of the Patriots,' and my husband greeted the new leader of the Irish party with laughter, asking him if he had really tumbled downstairs as was reported. Mr. McCarthy laughed too, assuring us that the reports were exaggerated and that there had been nothing of the kind. He said that the parting had been touching, and that many of the Parnellites had held out their hands as he passed; and he told us how Mr. 'Dick' Power—a friend of all of us, who remained in the Parnell camp—had dined with him afterwards in the House and they had mournfully drunk champagne together—for the last time as fellow-members of a united Irish Party.

The new leader found himself heavily taxed with the labour of reconstruction and preparation for the electoral fight at Cork, with which Parnell had threatened him. He

was glad to take from me the help in his literary work which, in emergency, we always rendered each other. He writes :

Dec. 9, '90.

'Oh, my dear colleague, I am so much obliged to you for the story. I sent it off forthwith, with one glance at the closing page which seemed to me to be delightful. What should I have done but for your helping hand ?

'I have had a long dreary day in the House, helping in the preparation of a long manifesto, which after all, is *not* to appear to-morrow. The House is up, but I shan't escape politics all the same. If I can, I will call on you to-morrow at half-past four.'

Cheyne Gardens, Dec. '90.

'We have been hard at work reorganizing. We have sent off Arthur O'Connor and another man to Paris to-night with letters from me to endeavour to stop the issue of the Paris funds—and we find that we have funds enough here to carry us on for the present. Some of the men at the meeting to-day subscribed, moreover, twelve hundred pounds then and there, to carry us on for the moment—some of the men are very well off and can afford to help us—and they gave us their guarantees for thirty thousand pounds if we should think it necessary to start a daily paper in Dublin to advocate our party in opposition to the *Freeman's Journal*. We shall hold our first meeting to-morrow in the House of Commons, and send to all our adversaries the usual summons, as to an ordinary party meeting.

'Every post brings me a whole bundle of letters and telegrams. I am harassed by people trying to interview me. To-day when I came downstairs I found my study occupied by an artist from the *Daily Graphic* who was engaged in making a sketch of that picturesquely ordered apartment ! I fled to the House of Commons, thinking that on the whole it was a better protected place. Now the House is up and that refuge is gone. Well—one must only look out for quieter times—and for days that are not all fog and gloom. . . .'

It was certainly a stirring time, in the journalistic as well as in the political world. American cable companies

competed for the transmission of Justin McCarthy's manifesto, offering to cable at any length for nothing. In the House of Commons various Tory members had come up to him with congratulations. He was immensely cheered on rising to give notice of a motion, and it was evident that the good-will of the House was with him. It pleased him that in the Central Lobby, two days after the deposition, Parnell himself crossed the Lobby to shake hands with him in perfect cordiality. 'It is an odd, interesting, dramatic life,' he said to me. 'If only I had a certain income of a thousand a year I would give myself up to this thing. As it is, I shall only keep the position for a short time. I have not the health or time or money to maintain it.'

Again he writes :

'I have wired to Mrs. Forbes accepting her invitation to dinner. Perhaps she may assign me to you, which would be very nice. I shall not be able to go near you to-day. I have all sorts of people to see me—and I am to meet Sexton and Deasy at the National Liberal Club at six this afternoon on some matter which they wire to me is of the greatest importance. I do not know what it is or how long I shall have to stay there—but it seems to me not unlikely that I may have to throw over my dinner-party at the last moment. I have to go to the *Daily News* later on and write an article. If I get beside you to-morrow evening it will be a relief. I want to have a talk with you. . . .' Dec. '90.

The wish was gratified. Mrs. Forbes, with that intuitive comprehension of her guests' sympathies which makes her so charming a hostess, did put us next each other. I find her party recorded in my journal, where is noted some of my literary colleague's talk—perhaps because it was his first resumption of normal social life after the passionate struggle in which he had broken from his old chief, perhaps because our novelists' tendency led us to discuss the pictorial and dramatic aspects of the political situation. He said : 'Life

is interesting and curious as a spectacle, if one could only look at it from the upper boxes always, but one has to come down—one cannot help it.'

It was one of his conceits of phrase—that of viewing life from the 'upper boxes': he quoted it yearningly now. I asked him if he took pleasure in the Leadership; and he answered, 'Yes I suppose so . . . I feel the responsibility, and I think it will take me six months to get to look at life from a new point of view.' . . . He said, 'I feel inclined to say with *Edgar* in "King Lear," "An' if I were afeard of loud voices, I should not live a fortnight."'

The loud voices must sometimes have seemed deafening then. Emotion ran high. His name was ever in the newspapers. He was the titular leader of a party cloven in two; the minority enemies: others still hankering after the lost leader, who was fulfilling his threat of fighting the deserters in every camp.

I find also noted another dinner-party, at the house of a Liberal Q.C., where we were sent in together, just before Mr. McCarthy's departure for his first contest with Parnell in Cork. It makes a vivid impression, that dinner, on the memory shadow-sheet. The Adam dining-room: the long table with its shaded lights: the shapes of the candelabra and old silver: the hot-house flowers—orchids, lilies, and white lilac, the perfume of which I associate with this occasion: the solemn rotation of courses: the buzz of conversation, and, through it, my colleague talking to me very mournfully of Irish difficulties, of his burden of responsibility, of the bitter pain it was to him to oppose Parnell. We remarked upon a certain feeling of bewilderment we both had—a sense of deep reality in the midst of unreality, of solemn issues at stake, and of isolation from the frothy background of London social life, 'with,' as he said, 'always the tragedy underneath.'

Yet, no doubt, others there had something of the same feeling, for there were several present closely concerned in past and future political developments.

'I can tell you—for you will understand,' Mr. McCarthy said to me—'that I would rather be going to my death upon a battle-field than forth to this political fight in my own country, against the leader I have loved.'

He writes from the battle-scene.

'We are having a noisy time of it here and I don't get a moment to myself and have been vainly trying to write to you. The Cork meeting to-day was a great gathering and was completely successful in our sense—not a word said in favour of Parnell. But the mob are all in favour of Parnell and we had a hard time of it when we got to the station at midnight last night—and to-day in the streets after the meeting—and Colonel Turner at the head of the police has called on me this evening and insisted that, when we leave town for Kilkenny to-morrow, he must occupy the station with a strong force to prevent disturbance. Funny position, is it not, for a quiet London literary man! But I must say that the mob appears to be only noisy and not at all vicious—and I have not seen or been the object of any act of menace or violence. Still it is all a hateful condition of things—to be howled at as enemies where we used to be blessed as friends. But the whole intelligence of the people is with us and we have done wonderfully well. . . . I hope to be in London on Sunday. I shall be glad to be at literature again!' Royal Victoria Hotel, Cork, Dec. 17, '90.

'Our departure from Cork was safe and even tame. It was a day of drenching pitiless rain, and the mob did not turn out, and the police and our friends had the station all to themselves. I am strongly under the impression that Colonel Turner wanted to please the Government, who now patronise the Parnellites, by showing that we needed protection. We protested and would not tell him when we were going—and we put off our departure for two hours, but he had the station crowded with police all the same. . . . We have carried Cork County completely with us. Not much time is left to Sexton and me to work in Kilkenny for we shall have to go to Paris or Havre to meet William O'Brien when he Dec. 18.

arrives and talk with him over the condition of things. I am surrounded by men and I can't write. . . .'

London, Dec. '90. '*Daily News* Office, Thursday night—late.

'If my law-case does not come on to-morrow, I will come to you at luncheon time. If I do not turn up you will know that I am appearing in the character of defendant in a civil process—I have heard no political news of any moment. I expect a letter from William O'Brien in the morning. . . . I am wearying of this part of the political crisis—this futile delay and hopeless negotiation. I feel like the raw recruits who cannot bear the long agony of waiting motionless for a delayed action. . . .'

Boulogne, Dec. 23, '90. 'I might have remained for your dinner-party after all, if only I could have known, for O'Brien is not here yet. The fogs are delaying the steamer. I hope your dinner went off well and I only wish I could have been one of the company. I had a cold, drear, dark and lonesome voyage, but never mind about that! We have won our splendid victory in Kilkenny, such a triumph—and it may do a world of good. It may scatter the Parnellite hopes and crumble the association and stop this odious civil war. . . . Newspaper correspondents have been pouring in upon me—quite as if I were in London or Dublin.'

London, Dec. 26. 'Yes, I shall be delighted to go to luncheon with you to-morrow. . . . It was late when I got back from Boulogne, and I found a message from Bessie O'Connor, who has returned from America, to the effect that she had been commissioned by T.P. to come and see me and tell me several things and ask me about several things concerning which she is to write to him to-morrow. I will tell you all about my experiences to-morrow. . . . We had rather a hard time of it, and the day—yesterday I think—it seems a month ago—when we went cruising out into the Channel to find William O'Brien's vessel, was as cold as if we had been navigating Arctic seas. Therefore I have a heavy cold—and I am afraid O'Brien will not be as strong with Parnell as he ought to be—and I am rejoiced at our Kilkenny victory, and I am sorry for other things—and there you are! . . .'

Dec. 30, '90. 'What a dreary day! I have been working at my "North American" article and am tired of it. . . . To-day something has gone wrong with all the chimneys of our house except the

study—and a fire cannot be lighted in any but that—and we have sent for the British workman, and, it being Christmas-time, he is in no hurry to do any work—so my poor study has to be made meal-room, work-room, and reception-room all in one. Picton, Radical member for Leicestershire, came to see me about some important question concerning English help for evicted tenants, and he had to be brought into the study while we were finishing luncheon, as there was no other place to bring him to.'

CHAPTER XVI

BROKEN THREADS

The whole Parnell-O'Shea tragedy is too recent to be regarded in the cold light of history. Yet it is too far off for the mind of the present generation to have grasped more than its salient features of dramatic interest. No doubt few readers of to-day will remember the story of those futile Boulogne negotiations, when Mr. Dillon and Mr. O'Brien—for whose arrest warrants had been out for some time in Ireland—were, on their return from America, met separately by both Parnell and Justin McCarthy with a view to solving the difficulties of the Irish Party.

Nothing, however, came of these negotiations, which were in fact looked upon as a mere strategic trick. Later, Mr. Dillon and Mr. O'Brien let themselves be arrested. They spent some months in prison in Ireland, and, at the expiration of that time, returned to public life, avowed Anti-Parnellites.

At the opening of 1891, Mr. McCarthy was hovering between England and France pursuing these hopeless negotiations, as he tells in his letters of this time.

Jan. 5, '91. 'I have had no news from Paris which I suppose means that nothing has happened. I am inclined to think that there is no truth in the newspaper stories and that O'Brien is simply waiting—very simply indeed—to meet Parnell at Boulogne

to-morrow and hear all he has to say. In this case I must think that no news is good news, for if O'Brien were going wrong, Healy would certainly have wired to me. There was one decided advantage in his reticence. I was able to meet two successive interviewers who called on me this evening, with the frank words that I would tell them all I knew and that was absolutely nothing.'

'I am cross, dear Colleague—very cross—you would not know me if you were to see me—I am so *very* cross. What is it all about, you would naturally ask? Because—I have remained here patriotically waiting for some messages from Healy and B. who are coming back from Paris, and I have heard nothing of them. . . . Either they did not come, or their train was late and they drove at once across town to Euston and went off to Ireland—and anyhow, here I am, having thrown away my evening and knowing nothing. I have had several visits from interviewers and two envoys from Schnadhorst—these latter only about the Hartlepool election and not about Paris—and I have been trying to do some literary work—and the weather is bitterly cold—and, on the whole, I feel rather "out of it." I hate the delay in these impossible negotiations—and I would much rather be fighting than writing—and the whole thing is anxious and unpleasant.' Jan. 6, '91.

'I have had pressing telegrams from William O'Brien, the result of which is that after hours of consultation to-day, Sexton and I have agreed to go to Boulogne to-morrow. It will come to nothing, but we have all come to the conclusion —reluctantly it is true—that we cannot put ourselves into the position of flatly refusing to listen to proposals which O'Brien now assures me he thinks we shall be able to accept. So we go. I shall be back in good time for your luncheon-party on Sunday.' *Daily News* Office, Jan. 8, '91.

'. . . I believe Gladstone wishes that we should go (to Boulogne) before he gives his final answer to my request for an interview. I had a long letter from him this morning. It is very courteous and friendly, but he will not treat in any way where Parnell is concerned. Then I ask him through John Morley and the telegraph-wire, would he help us by making some public statement by speech or letter wholly independently of Parnell's conditions: and I think he would *Daily News* Office, Jan. '91.

do this, only he wanted to feel sure that by doing it, he could secure O'Brien and Dillon for *us*. . . .

'I have been negotiating and seeing people and attending a meeting of the party and writing a leader—and I am tired. My law-case went against me as you will have seen—and it will decide lots of others.

'As soon as these negotiations are over, I must begin to be-think myself seriously as to what course I shall take—but until they are over there is no use in planning anything. They may end in enabling me to resign the leadership, which would set me comparatively free. . . .'

Jan. 18, '91. 'I had not a chance of seeing you to-day because Arnold Morley came to see me, sent by Gladstone, to know how things were going on: and I had to talk to him a great deal and ask him many questions—and to write letters in consequence.

'Also I sat for my portrait, and I dined at Fletcher Moulton's. The House meets on Thursday. . . .'

Cheyne Gardens, Jan. '91. '. . . I wonder if you could come and dine at the House before you go away—just as a parting visit?

'. . . I have been to a luncheon at Lady Dorothy Nevill's where I was the only man submerged in a vortex of petticoats—Lady Dorothy, Meresia, Lady Porchester and Miss Broughton. It might have been very pleasant but my mind was not in it. My jury had retired to consider my case: and they are apparently considering it yet. As I had given evidence and could do no more, I came here and am now waiting for a verdict. . . . Also I am expecting a letter or telegram from Hawarden. I wrote yesterday asking for an interview at the earliest possible moment. To-night I dine with Arnold Morley. I may hear some news from him. . . . I find the present crisis—political and pecuniary—somewhat oppressive. . . .'

Jan. 31, '91. 'I write to-day mainly for the purpose of offering two or three suggestions for the "Literary Woman" article. I think I would try to picture certain distinct types of the literary woman one meets in society. First perhaps it would be as well to define society, etc.—to explain that there are ever so many literary women who never take the trouble to get into or anywhere near society and who yet are not Bohemian in the true sense, but who have their own quiet social gatherings in the Bloomsbury and Fitzroy Square region and are content.

'Then, in society, there is the self-assertive woman who rather tramps over people and shoulders her way in—bullies herself into society. Then there is the meek fair-haired woman who loves to be patronised and rather appeals to the duchesses and countesses to be kind to her—and they *are* kind to her and thereby flatter their self-love. Then there is the literary woman who is a journalist as well—you might keep your mind on two specimens—Lady Colin Campbell and Mrs. Lynn Linton. Of course I don't mean that you should draw portraits of your friends and acquaintances, but only to have some faint outline in your mind to guide you. Then there is the type of literary woman, whom Mrs. C—— H—— not unfittingly represents, who conveys very clearly the idea that all that sort of society is what she naturally belongs to and that it is hers by right and with no reference to her literary claims—who calls the duchesses and the countesses by their Christian names and is called by them in the same fashion—I don't know whether this is not all rather frivolous or whether it is the kind of thing you would like to try. If you don't see it, tell me and I will look out some better ideas. In any case, I think you might dwell on the almost complete disappearance of the "Woman of Quality" authoress who was so common a figure in the society of a former day. We have two or three women of rank, like Lady Dufferin, who write books, but we have not, so far as I can remember, any noble personage engaging herself in literature as a profession. . . .'

The letters follow me on my annual swallow-flight.

'This letter I want you to receive when you arrive in Cannes, and to be as a welcome—as if I were standing at the door to receive you, which unfortunately I shall not be. I hope you will have had time enough to enjoy Avignon and the Palace of the Popes—but I do not suppose you would venture on the pilgrimage to Vaucluse. . . . London, Feb. 1, 1891.

'You are probably in Cannes to-day. I wonder how the place looks to you, and if you are glad to be there again. . . . I came back from Liverpool yesterday. . . . I am going off to Leicester this afternoon. The Liverpool affair went off very well. I made the statement which John Morley, at Gladstone's request, advised me to make. I had to decide this

all for myself because Sexton had gone off suddenly to Dublin—and perhaps it was just as well that I had to decide for myself, for it was not a question to allow of delay or discussion. I decided, as we thought it would be well to decide, when we talked it over—and I made my speech accordingly.

'I saw John Morley last evening, and he gave me to understand that the speech gave satisfaction—and now we have only to wait and hear what Gladstone will say. Probably he will say something—more likely write a letter to-day or to-morrow. Anyhow I can do no more. I expect Gill from Boulogne to-morrow with news of our exiled friends.'

Feb. '91. 'I met Parnell at the House last night. He was walking with some stranger—at least a stranger to me. He left his friend and came over to me with beaming eyes and outstretched hand, and clasping my hand in quite an affectionate sort of way, began to ask me questions about my health and so forth. Of course I replied in as friendly a fashion as I could, and so we parted.

'To-morrow Sir James Linton gives a luncheon-party in honour of the starting of *Black and White*. On Saturday Williamson gives a dinner at the Criterion to celebrate the same event. I hope the paper will do well. I am indeed sanguine about its success.

'I am looking for a letter from you: you must have got to Cannes long before this, but I know that in travelling one does not easily get time to write letters.'

Cheyne Gardens, Feb. 6, '91. 'I have been absorbed in political negotiations—seeing John Morley every day and almost every hour. The Boulogne exiles are not able to say anything without the assent of Parnell, and Gladstone strongly objects to being brought into even the most indirect relationship with Parnell: and between the two sets of negotiators, Sexton and I have a bad time of it. Just whenever things are getting settled, behold they are all unsettled again. I begin to be rather weary of it and to wish impatiently that the whole negotiations were broken off. I took in the fair Margot Tennant to dinner this evening at Sir Algernon West's. She has beautiful eyes, but is not, I think, otherwise pretty. She is very clever and lively, but part of her liveliness and her success consists in saying and doing exactly what she likes without the slightest regard to conventionality. It was a very pleasant little dinner at a

small round table. Herbert Gladstone and Asquith and Lord Randolph Churchill were there besides my host. Lord Randolph was very friendly, and we had a long talk after dinner. I had not met him for a long time.

'I was at a luncheon given by Sir James Linton in honour of the first publication of *Black and White*. It quite convulsed Fleet Street to-day. Oddly enough, I have not seen it—to read or look at, I mean. My "Blue Spectacles" is coming out next week with some charming illustrations by Du Maurier.'

'. . . I have no political news to-day. The situation is not improved. I have not seen John Morley since Friday night. I do not know whether Gladstone is, or is not, going to issue his manifesto. It may appear in the papers to-morrow, or he may decide not to do anything. He has taken fright at the shadow of Parnell in the background and sometimes seems disinclined to do anything which might give the slightest countenance to Parnell's assertion that he is compelling the leader of the Opposition to move in his direction. Dillon and O'Brien will not assent to anything unless Parnell assents to it. Gladstone will not give any assurances which he believes likely to be offered for Parnell's assent. We *can't* get rid of the presence of Parnell, and of course everyone knows that he is in communication with Dillon and O'Brien: I think it ought to be enough, that we who are in actual negotiation—I mean Sexton and I—are not in any communication with Parnell. At present there is a pause—a blank—and I fear all will turn to the account of Parnell, at least for the moment. John Morley has rendered us great services, and I am sure is doing and will do all he can to move the Grand Old Man—but meantime the condition of things is decidedly unpleasant. Feb. 8, '91.

'I hope Campbell is enjoying himself. I wish I were out with you and him—I should like to see the Carnival. But of course I am chained here while these negotiations are dragging on.'

'I had hoped to be able to write to you by the evening post. I was in the House of Commons negotiating and confabulating and could not get a quiet moment. Our negotiations are at an end—broken off abruptly by O'Brien and Dillon—that is, really by Parnell—because Gladstone could not see his way to adopt an utterly unreasonable alteration. Feb. '91.

It has ended, as I knew from the beginning it must end—because I knew that Parnell had not the remotest idea of allowing us to make a peace. Now we must go on and do the best we can. We shall hold a meeting of the party to-morrow, and we have Gladstone's permission to make known the conditions which he is willing to give us. That will be a point in our favour, for it shows that we could have got and will get all from the Liberals that we asked them to give us. Personally, the whole affair is unpleasant to me, for it makes it impossible for me to get out of the leadership all at once as I had some hope of being able to do. I must hold on now, for a time at least—but my mind is absolutely made up to get out of the position the first moment that I can. . . .

'Let me know all about your literary plans and doings. I am hardly able to do anything at present but negotiate and write letters. I do so yearn for literary work again and a literary life but "when can'st tell?" as somebody says in the immortal bard.'

Meanwhile, the terms of the second Home Rule Bill and the preliminary arrangements with Mr. Gladstone hung fire, waiting upon the combined action of the new Nationalist Party.

Cheyne Gardens, Feb. 13, '91.

'I have just come back from the House. I have actually been living there the last few days. We have had meetings of our party every day. Last night—our negotiations having utterly broken off—Dillon and O'Brien came over to Folkestone to surrender themselves and were forthwith arrested. They were taken to Scotland Yard for the night and I went and saw them there. We had a long and very friendly talk over all manner of affairs political. I am sorry for their course of action—they have done us much harm. . . . Both, however, are with us still so far that they say they could never accept Parnell's leadership again. . . . I met him at the House to-night to talk over what we had best do to help the evicted tenants. We were very friendly in language and had a long consultation. But I could not trust him in the least, and our talk did not come to much. We arranged for another consultation, and as we were parting, he said, "Now the papers

will say that you and I have arranged a treaty together": and I said, "Yes, I suppose so."

'He said "I wish we were": and I made no answer—and we parted for the time.

'I wonder if all this seems very dull to you who are so far away from the scene of strife and on whose ears the echo of the battle din must come so faintly. But you ask me to tell you about politics. I am swallowed up in politics. I write nothing but political leaders and letters—go nowhere but to the House of Commons, or to some dinner where I meet House of Commons men and we talk House of Commons talk. But pray do not imagine that in all the House of Commons talk I have forgotten to hope that the air and atmosphere and the skies of Cannes are doing you good and that if—or when—I have the chance of going out there, I shall find you looking the better for your release from the London winter.

'I think we stand very well just now, both before England and Ireland, and I think Parnell feels that too. The English Liberals are well content with us, and so, I am sure, are the Irish people. My resignation of the leadership is out of the question for the moment—and my literary work stands still. I paid away all the money I had, to meet the costs of the Irish Exhibition so far—but I have good hopes that the matter will end better than might have been expected and that we shall be able to get the dukes and marquises to come in—and that it will be a case of heavy loss merely at the worst, and not a case of ruin, and that I shall get through it without asking anyone to do anything for me. In the meantime, Chatto has offered to let me draw on him at the moment's notice—on account of my History copyrights and of a novel to be done hereafter—and so if we do not lose our appeal on the Coutts's Bank case I shall be able to pull through. Chatto has acted in the most kind and friendly fashion throughout the whole affair—and I have not, thank Heaven, to ask a favour of anybody. I tell you all this because I know it will interest you and because I know you will enter into my feelings. . . .'

'. . . We are somewhat quiet for the moment in our political world, but we are making very energetic preparations, all the same, for a campaign in Ireland for the starting of a new paper in Dublin. It will come out on the 2nd or, at the Feb. 18, '91.

furthest, the 7th of March—and truth to say, we don't want to make any forward movement till it is ready—for we fight at a great disadvantage with no paper to give our views and back us up.

'In the debate on John Morley's motion, we decidedly scored, because Parnell for some unexplained reason threw up the sponge and left me in undisturbed possession of the leadership.

'. . . He had taken his seat early in the evening, and a number of his followers had come early and taken the seats that Sexton and Healy and I always occupy. We could not come in early, for we were holding a meeting and could not leave it. So we assumed that this meant he was going to try for the leader's part and final reply in the debate. Tom Potter, the good old Free-Trade member for Rochdale, at once gave me up his seat—a firstrate position, two places above and in front of Parnell—the first seat on the third row below the gangway—a great vantage-ground for the speaker. There we sat, except for dinner-time, all the night. We had arranged that if Parnell rose at any early hour, I was not to rise but to let him go on and assert my leadership by rising at the very end of the debate. He did not rise and the debate was drawing to its end. If he rose, then I must rise also, and I have no doubt the Speaker would have called me, but it would have been a sort of unseemly struggle. We thought Parnell meant it however and we saw nothing for it but to fight it out. Suddenly he left the House. The orator in possession closed his speech. I got up—I was loudly cheered by the Liberals who understood the situation—and made my speech. This all seems small, but is regarded as significant and was much commented on in the papers. I thought it would interest you—it is like something in "The Rebel Rose." Now I think I have told you all my politics. I'll tell you more next time.

'. . . I saw Campbell to-day. We went to two meetings together. . . . Do not be concerned about me. I am all right. The political troubles will not do me harm, the financial troubles I shall get over without any breakdown, I hope and believe. . . .'

Feb. '91. 'I met Campbell last night, dear colleague, at a dinner given by the directors of *Black and White* to the working

staff. He had to go away early to a theatre—the Garrick —and he was lucky. It was a portentously dull affair. The speeches were long and dull—my own speech was very dull. I was quite conscious of the fact, but the more conscious I grew the duller I grew. There were comic recitations—performances which I abhor—and specimens of Scotch humour and Scotch dialect which were utterly dismal.

'At the moment there is nothing much going on in politics except that I am engaged in a long and formal correspondence with Parnell about the Paris funds and we both write in a heavy diplomatic style which is my abomination.'

'The appeal in the case of Coutts's Bank has gone against me. I have just heard the bad news. We may perhaps fight it out in the House of Lords. . . . There is nothing political of any moment to-day.'

'. . . I am crossing over to Ireland to-morrow—we are to have a great convention there—in Dublin on Monday, to form our new National Organization to take the place of the National League which has been captured by Parnell. When I get back I am pledged to some meetings in England—two of Irishmen—Patrick's Day ceremonials for which we always keep ourselves ready—and a great meeting at Brighton of English Radicals with Campbell-Bannerman. March 7, '91.

'. . . We are in the greatest perturbation just now about the probability of Dilke's accepting an offer to become Radical candidate for the Forest of Dean division. The Radicals and our party are terribly excited about it. If he accepts and the Liberals do not object, what becomes of the case against Parnell? It would go near to setting Parnell up again, if he could say "Gladstone insisted on my withdrawal from the leadership of the Irish party and yet he has not a word to say against Charles Dilke coming back to the House."[1]

'Of course the cases are different. Gladstone did not ask that Parnell should leave the House—but all the public will see is that Gladstone objected somehow to the one man and

[1] To revive old scandals is ill work, when death has dropped the curtain and—in words my literary colleague was fond of using—'The rest is silence,' yet some of the present generation of readers may have forgotten that *cause célèbre* of the eighties which blighted the career of Sir Charles Dilke, one of the foremost statesmen of his day, and which has something of a parallel in the case of Charles Stewart Parnell.

did not object to the other. Mr. Stead and the "Nonconformist conscience" will be fearfully stirred and it may terribly affect the General Elections. I have been holding frequent conferences with Arnold Morley about it—he as the intermediary with Gladstone. My advice is that Gladstone should privately bring pressure on Dilke not to accept the candidature just yet. Arnold Morley advises me also to write to Dilke myself and in quite a friendly fashion give him my views. I think I shall do this. But of course Dilke would not be much governed by my views—Gladstone's wishes he could hardly disregard. I tell you all this because I think it may interest you.'

Shelbourne Hotel, Dublin, March 9, '91.

'I write a line to tell you that I am here. I have written to you many times from this hotel—at one time years and years ago I used to write to you from the Gresham in O'Connell Street. We came here in the raw hours of the early morning after a quiet passage. We hold our great meeting to-morrow. I will wire to you if anything interesting happens. Just fancy me deliberately writing this when, if anything happens and I do wire to you, you will get the wire long before you get this. Is it not something in the nature of an Irish Bull? . . .'

London, March 11.

'. . . I am just returned to London—to find it buried in a winter worse than ever. It is all but swallowed up in snow. Your letter followed me to Dublin and I read it with much pleasure amid all the political bustle and excitement. . . . I told you in my telegram enough to show that we have had a most splendid and successful meeting—have founded our new league—and that there was not the slightest attempt at disturbance. All the apprehensions that way proved groundless. In fact we are too strong to be attacked. Our new daily paper is a great success.

'So much for politics. . . . I enclose a page from Cassell's *Saturday Journal* which may perhaps amuse you. The interviewers saw me at the House of Commons and made a sketch of my study when I was not there. You will perhaps recognize your portrait, at least you will know what it is meant for—because I do not think you would know it again from this effort at pictorial reproduction. I have been doing no work lately, but I must turn to again at once. I got a remission of time for my sensation story—several months if I like—the Tillotsons behaved very handsomely and only stipulated that

I should, meantime, send them a one-instalment story of five thousand words, which I have agreed to do and give in before October. Do you know that I have a positively overwhelming number of engagements to do literary work quite apart altogether from my sempiternal "Georges."

'I have undertaken to do a short one-volume story for a new series brought out by Messrs. Henry of Bouverie Street, of which Davenport Adams is the editor. I have promised to send Rideing some articles as soon as possible and have promised some also to the *New York Independent* . . . but when—oh, when am I to write the articles? And I have undertaken to write a three-volume novel for Chatto within the year—and this I must do for he has been so kind and helpful to me. . . .'

'. . . I am entering on a long week of speech-making . . . I go to Brighton to-morrow evening to speak at a Liberal meeting there. I promised to preside at St. Patrick's dinner on Tuesday. I preside over a Southwark meeting on Wednesday. I have a meeting—I forget where—on Thursday, and an English Home Rule meeting at the National Liberal Club on Friday. All this as you know has been worked in with the House of Commons and the *Daily News* and literary work and all the rest. I ask myself, now and then, how long I can go on. . . . I had a few hours of purely literary work yesterday —going over my sensation story—oh how I hate it!—the first consecutive hours I have had at that kind of work for months. I have got into a kind of stony and stolid mood. For the present I must go on—and I try not to look one glimpse beyond the present. There is no good in looking forward any more than there is in looking backward. . . . I think I have got to the stage of human development in which I accept facts as they are and do not complain. I should have liked many things to be different—but who on earth would not say the same of his lot. I have had one or two severe shocks lately as you know—I am talking of political matters merely—and I have had to gather up the broken threads of my life and my friends and my faith and put them together as best as I can—for the one thing certain is that whilst one lives, one must go on living. But I seem, all the same, to get on very well with life.

March 15, '91.

'. . . I went to a "First Night" yesterday—"The

Volcano" at the Court Theatre—a foolish farce made into three acts—I did not see Campbell there. I saw and spoke to the Labouchères and the Bancrofts and the Pineros and the Henry Arthur Jones' and Joe Knight and ever so many more —and I felt as if I were out of it somehow and as if I did not care much about it all—and what does it matter anyhow ?

'. . . Our affairs are complicated here by the sudden death of one of our colleagues—a man named Macdonald—and this plunges us into another Kilkenny election. I shall try to get away all the same—I really do not feel up to the mark of fight at the election. I mean to consult Roose. I am sure he will tell me to go—not to Sligo, but to the Riviera. . . .'

March 21, '91. '. . . Why must you come back so soon ? The weather here is quite wintry still, it has been snowing to-day. Well—when your letter comes it will tell me about that—but meanwhile, as I told you in my telegram, Roose, whom I saw again to-day, has been urging me to go at once to the Riviera—insisting upon it, in fact . . . He says I am overdone—nervous exhaustion and I don't know what. . . . I wrote to Campbell yesterday as I did not find him at the *Black and White,* and told him I believed Roose would insist on my going out to the Riviera, and asked him if he had anything to send to you that I could take. I have not heard from him yet. I do not like the idea of your coming back to such a climate as we have here. I am afraid it will only undo all the good that may have been done to you by your stay at Cannes.'

March '91. 'I mean to leave early on Monday morning and shall be in Cannes on Tuesday afternoon . . . if you can secure a room for me will you wire to me at which hotel it is and also send a letter there which I shall get when I arrive telling me when I am to see you. . . . I have been dining at Lady Aberdeen's and had a great deal of talk with Gladstone—sat next to him after the ladies had gone. Then I came down here—*Daily News* Office—and wrote a leading article. To-morrow night I attend another public meeting. I begin to feel a little worn out, but I shall be better when I get away. . . .'

CHAPTER XVII

A WARNING

As far as I remember, this visit of Mr. McCarthy to Cannes was shorter than the previous one, for he had to hurry back to London on some political business. He had his quarters at the Hôtel Beau Séjour, which is not far from the Hôtel Californie, where I stayed; and we made several charming excursions—he and I together, and also in the company of friends. There was another picnic at Gourdon, and a long day at Grasse—how well I recollect the drive home through fields of blossom—the scent-making at Grasse being at the height of activity—for it was spring and the air was almost oppressive with the perfume of orange-flowers. The roses were out and the carnations a glory.

We went to the Lérins, too—the fortress of Ste. Marguerite and the dreamy island of St. Honorat with its monastery, and its legends of Honoratus and Margaret of the cherry-tree—how much more interesting and poetic than the bustling, modern Ste. Marguerite!

It was delightful to hear the political news at first hand; and, touching politics, Mr. McCarthy seemed to have a chastened hope of the carrying of Home Rule. But the strongest impression of him left on my mind at that time, was of his much weaker health and shattered nerves. I had never before known him lacking nerve-power in the real

sense, mentally or physically. He was not a strong man, but one could not associate moral or mental weakness with him. And, physically, he had seemed as well able for ordinary things as most men of sedentary habit. He was always a good walker, and we had been accustomed to take long walks together both in town and country. He had piloted me all along the Thames-side of London in the days when we searched out ' copy ' for ' The Grey River.' Likewise, through New York, which is an enterprise not exactly soothing to the nervous system. He had kept on deck in a very rough Atlantic and had made tremendous journeys in extremely bad weather. I had watched him cope with the aggressive interviewer and the ' local man ' : with a hostile crowd at an electioneering meeting : with his political opponents in the House of Commons : and with social emergencies requiring the utmost tact and coolness—in fact, I had seen him under all manner of trying conditions during those years of stress. At all times, he had met difficulties with perfect sweetness and placidity.

So it was somewhat of a shock one day—when we were pursuing our walk along the aqueduct to where some new road-operations obliged us to step along a plank bridge, spanning a by no means alarming chasm—to find that Mr. McCarthy, having ventured on the bridge behind me, could not proceed either backwards or forwards without my assistance. He was quite shaken and tremulous. That little incident showed me, more clearly than anything could have done, how great a change had come over him in the last year or two. To use his own Shakespearean phrasing, ' It gave one pause.'

My departure from Cannes that year followed his within a day or two, and his very next letter was a greeting on my arrival in London.

'. . . A little word of welcome—dear Colleague, to greet you this evening on your return home—if you should return. I very much wish you were not coming back quite so soon because of the dull, chill weather here and the dour east wind, but, if you should come, I wanted to be among those who welcome you, and as I can't go to see you, I send you this. I interviewed my Emperor [1] on Saturday—not long before I left Cannes. He was very friendly and presented me with a work on Brazil (of which he had written part) and wrote his autograph in it. Yet I am not proud! I speak to people as before!

House of Commons, Tuesday, April 7, '91.

'I had rather a dreary journey home.'

'. . . I shall not be able to dine with you to-morrow, even if you should be able to have me. This evening Gladstone drew me aside—said he wanted to talk to me about several things and that it would be best if I could come to dine with him to-morrow—Friday. This of course one regards as a sort of command, and as I had no definite engagement, I must go. . . . You will be pleased to hear that Gladstone entirely approves the course I propose to take.'

April 9.

'I have come back from my dinner. It was a small party and very pleasant. Gladstone was in great form and told us capital anecdotes of Macaulay and Peel and the Duke of Wellington, and of various soothsayers and phrenologists and fortune-tellers and hand-readers who had tried their skill on himself. He is still sceptical in the better sense—that is he wants more evidence—but his mind is not barred: he does not think our science knows all yet. I am to see him on political affairs on Wednesday. We had a long talk together after dinner.'

April 10. (Late.)

'Is your dinner-party coming off on Monday? . . . My adjournment motion about Davitt has been a dead failure. The announcement of the names was made unexpectedly—the House was nearly empty—I could not get my forty votes. Do you understand all this? No matter. I will tell you, if you care to hear all about it on Monday. It will be ancient history then. Good-bye, my friend.'

April '91.

'. . . I had a long and most interesting talk yesterday with Gladstone. Sexton was with me. The talk lasted an hour and a half. Gladstone took us fully into his confidence

April 16, '91.

[1] The ex-Emperor of Brazil, then at Cannes.

as regards his next Home Rule Bill and invited all manner of suggestions and frequent conferences. To-day, I had a long talk with Cardinal Manning; he sent for me—and of course I went—to speak about Irish affairs. Both he and Gladstone are extremely sanguine. It was in its way beautiful to see the courage and hope of these two old men, each on the verge of the grave and each glowing and quivering with interest in the affairs of a world which he is soon to leave. It was an interview first with a statesman and then with a saint. The impassioned energy of Gladstone: the sweet, strong saintliness of Manning. These were studies to set one thinking. After all, it is much to have known such men. . . . I missed Ashdowne's dinner at the Crystal Palace on Wednesday. I was kept too late at the House—had to swallow some cold food here and rush off to the Crystal Palace to be in time for the opening of the musical-club concert over which I had to preside. It was rather dreary and suburban—and I hate the suburbs. To-morrow, I am going to meet Lord Hartington at Gilbert's studio to see the model of the Bright memorial statue. Then I go to the "Economic" and "Black and White," and then I hope to be with you at half-past three, unless I hear to the contrary. I shall be so glad to see you and have some talk—even if it be only for half an hour.'

Midnight, April 23, '91. '. . . We have had a long talk with Gray [1] and arranged what really appears a promising basis of negotiation. Of course it is only a basis yet, but I think it will come to something and will allow me to withdraw with honour from the leadership and leave an united party. Then I should be free—free to do what? To follow quiet literature here? To go round the world? To settle in America? Alas, I know not.'

April '91. '. . . How much I wished that I could have gone to you this evening. . . . But I have to see my Dublin friend—and have just seen John Morley and shall have to see him again. The young man—only just turned twenty-one (Young Gray of the *Freeman's Journal*) is as clever, cool, self-convinced and bold as *Vivian Grey* himself. If we can persuade him to make the *coup*—and I believe he will make it—the crisis will be over. I think I see in him the future prime minister of an Irish parliament. . . .'

[1] Son of Mr. Edward Dwyer Gray, managing director of the *Freeman's Journal*, who had died in 1888.

'. . . After I left you, I went to see Cardinal Manning and had a long talk with him. I thought it better to go to him at once and throw over the correspondent of the National Press. Virtue was its own reward, for the correspondent did not turn up until long after I got back, and—as is the way of correspondents—when I was in the middle of dinner.' April 26, '91.

'I was at a huge dinner this evening at Theodore Fry's —all Radicals. There was no woman present but the hostess and she was taken in by the youngest man in the room—Sir Thomas Esmonde, because he was the baronet of oldest title then present. It was quite right of course, but seemed a little funny in such a Radical assemblage.' April 28.

'. . . My dinner-party last night was very pleasant. Lord Spencer was there and his wife—and Lord Carrington who had just been making a rattling speech in the House of Lords on the Newfoundland question, and Henry Gladstone and his wife, and Herbert Paul and his wife, and George Russell and various other people that I know. I had a long talk with Lord Spencer after dinner about Irish affairs past and present —he told me some interesting things. My dinner-party of this night has broken down because my host and hostess have both got influenza.' May 5.

'I found myself next to Parnell here this afternoon. He began a long and most friendly talk about things in general —not politics—as if nothing had ever happened between us.— He is inexplicable.' House of Commons, May 7.

'. . . I have been passing an odd sort of day—feeble, longing to remain in bed—determined not to do so just yet. It may turn out to be nothing, but if I don't wake up all right to-morrow, I shall go and see Dr. Roose, and, if he tells me, I shall give up the Newcastle expedition.' Cheyne Gardens, May 14.

Mr. McCarthy's illness proved more serious than he had anticipated. The influenza-fiend of that year was a visitant to be dreaded. My literary colleague writes to me from his bed.

'Just a line, dear Colleague—the first I have written from here—to say how I welcomed your letter and shall be glad to welcome more. I am going on very well and Roose is quite May 17, '91.

content so far. . . . I have a nurse—only fancy !—a well-dressed respectable young woman in my room at all hours, who makes up my pillows, twists me about in bed, feeds me about fifteen times a day, puts mustard plasters on me and rubs me with liniment whenever she likes.

'It is an absolutely new experience to me. I never before was a day in bed. There is a certain sluggish satisfaction in the enforced and dreamy quietude.

'I am delighted to hear that you are getting on so well with your work. When I get to the sofa stage, you must come and read some of it to me.'

May 18. '91. '. . . I am doing quite well, but the chill winds are against me. I lie placidly in bed all day and the world seems quite far away from me. I lead the life of a solemn, incurious fish at the bottom of a deep pool.'

May 19. '. . . I have got both your letters—they came together this morning. I am delighted to hear about your work. I like your latest ideas very much and am glad to hear there is to be no killing off in the conventional way. Killing off is a poor solution—if it is only meant as a solution. If it is the outcome of foreshadowed fate, that is different. Anyhow, you had better follow your star whither that leads you. I am getting on very well, but Roose holds out no prospect of early emancipation. He points to the fate of poor Lord Edward Cavendish who was allowed to go out too soon. I am very sorry for Lord Edward. We used to meet very often, for he was a member of the Committee of Selection. . . . I am allowed two glasses of dry champagne at luncheon and again at dinner. It is the best thing for influenza it seems—for which I am glad. What prosaic details ! '

May 20. '91. '. . . I had a long serious talk with Roose yesterday. He says the influenza has recalled evidences of the old malady and that things may be serious if not well cared for. I am not to return to the House of Commons this Session—even for one single day or one single division. Of course, I shall accept this decree absolutely and act upon it. He wants me to go away for a long time. But I think he would not hold out on this and would be content if I were to go to some seaside place and then come back to my quiet literary work in London. He does not mind literary work at all—only the wear and tear of the House of Commons.'

WOODLANDS, HERTFORDSHIRE
(From a Painting by John Watkins Chapman

'. . . I plod along. I shall turn steadily to literary work, try to pull up arrears. If you take a country-house, perhaps you will ask me to go and stay there now and then—and I shall go. I don't feel depressed at all about the future and I don't want to die, but very much want to live. May 21 '91.

'The days go by with a curious monotonous swiftness. I do not chafe. I do not repine—I do not seem to have any particular wish to do anything. I read the papers and books—yesterday I dictated a leading article and it came out very well in to-day's *Daily News*.

'I am reading some New England stories by a Miss Wilkins, They are very clever and fresh—quite real in the narrow, pinched and colourless life they picture, but tender and poetic too.

'It was a shock to hear of the sudden death of Sir Robert Fowler by influenza. He was too a member of the Committee of Selection. We have lost two members in less than a week from the same cause. I knew Fowler well and liked him—he was a friendly, genial Tory. This sort of thing begins to be a little like a battle in which you lie wounded and are told that friend after friend is down—and you are supposed not to make much of it.'

'. . . I was allowed to get up for two hours yesterday —of course, not to leave my room. I enjoyed it—and then I was glad to get back to bed again after dinner. I slept at night as if I had been doing a hard day's work. How one's horizon contracts! To be up for two hours seems an enterprise over which trumpets ought to be sounded. May '91.

'Dick Whiteing came yesterday and sat with me and talked charmingly. I had three visits from Mrs. Maurice Healy—she came and sat with me and told me all sorts of news—a dear, bright, winsome young woman. I have known her since she was a little child. We warned her of the danger of influenza—but she said she had had it already, and her babies are safe in Cork. Personally, I am utterly opposed to running risks. I don't see the use of it.'

'I do hope you will be able to secure that charming place —for it does appear from your letter to be very charming and just suited to you.[1] I shall be delighted to go and see May 25, '91.

[1] Woodlands, a small house surrounded by woods in Hertfordshire, which we took on lease.

you there. But you will not be there all the time, will you? You will sometimes come to town? Or do you mean to let your Norfolk Square house for the present? . . .

'I am going on very well. Just now I am reading up the recent volume of Peel's early letters upon which I have to work up a chapter for a second edition—to be stereotyped and made perpetual—of my Peel's volume. I shall get nothing for the chapter but I am bound to do it all the same. Dear Colleague, I don't *write* leading articles. I shan't be up to that mark yet for a week. I only *dictate* them. But it refreshes and brightens me to write to you.

'. . . I feel my grip on life loosened somehow—feel as if I had less to do with it. You see there is the precarious recovering from this business and then the vigil against the malady of which Roose has long forewarned me—and the leaving politics for this Session, and perhaps for ever—and all this tells one, at the least, that life must henceforth be taken under limitations about which formerly he had never concerned himself. I am not disappointed, discouraged, distressed, cast down—only there it is! I should like to appear again in the House of Commons next Session and do *something*—not merely fade out. Is this foolish? Well, if I come all right, I may feel differently a few months hence.'

May 26, '91. 'I am writing to you in an upright position and seated at a desk, for the first time during nearly a fortnight. It is a great relief to be able to sit up and write at a desk like a Christian—and I have just had luncheon erect at a little table like an ordinary human being—and I daresay before long I shall be taking a turn on the Embankment and even—who knows?—making a call at 39 Norfolk Square! Up to this time that sort of thing seemed to me vague, out of the question, almost impossible. Now, really, I begin to think that I shall some day be calling at 39 Norfolk Square again.

'Don't think all this ridiculous. It exactly mirrors my feelings. You must remember that I never in all my life, until now, was one day or one half-day in bed. Therefore to be ten days or more in bed is an innovation to me that, in any absurd mood of mine, is like the world turned upside down. And to have a hospital nurse—a young woman, who after I have bade her formal farewell at night, comes gliding softly into my room in the grey morning to find out whether I am

too hot or too cold—whether I ought to have brandy and milk or not—all this, I can assure you, is such a *bouleversement* of my ordinary ways that you will hardly wonder if I find myself unable to understand whether I am myself or somebody quite different.

'I wonder whether you have gone to the Derby to-day. Needless to say *I* am not going. I shall probably be packed away somewhere on Saturday. I am afraid there will be no drawing-room or sofa stage. I rather fancy that Roose will keep me in my room until he finds a warm bright day, and then he will say to me as he did about Cannes this year: "Now, look here, dear friend, pack up your things and catch the train." May 27, '91.

'. . . Well, anyhow I shall come back—what should hinder ?—as the nigger-melody puts it.

'Speaking of nigger-melodies, did I tell you some woman whom I don't know wrote to me the other day asking where she could get the music of *Radoo* in "The Right Honourable"—a book for which she was pleased to express admiration. I referred her to Bessie O'Connor as the one who had set the song to music.

'Herbert Paul has just been to see me. He and his wife have been on a short tour in Holland which they enjoyed immensely. He went away in the faith of my being able to do his work! Alas! "so I would have done by yonder sun" as the immortal bard has it—only fate and influenza intervened.'

'I should be delighted to dine with you to-morrow, especially to have my first venture into the open air with you. To-day, I meant to go out, but the weather is too bad, and I dare not, for the recovery is the trouble in this tantalizing influenza—"not the fall, but the fetch-up." I shall see Roose to-night and ask him if I may drive to-morrow. I should enjoy a drive with you. May 28, '91.

'Oh! if I can pull through this thing—I mean the whole affair, I shall register a solemn vow never under any circumstances and beset by whatever temptations, to get sick again. It is not worth it—really it isn't. . . . There's the moral. *Don't* get sick: die, if you will—that's all right: that's fair, but don't get sick—I'll never do it again. . . .'

'. . . We got down here yesterday and in time for a sort

Boscombe Chine Hotel, May 30, '91.

of hurricane which was our welcome, but to-day there is a complete change and the sea and sky are steeped in sunshine. Still it is not very warm in the shade, and one has to remember that he is bound to practise the craft and mystery of being a convalescent. . . .'

June 6.

'. . . I don't seem as yet to get strong. I feel sometimes like a bird whose wings have been clipped. . . . I do not fancy there will be any winter session after all and that will give me time to turn round. I do not propose in any case to hold the leadership after Dillon and O'Brien are free.'

Bournemouth, June 12.

'I am still wavering as to my movements by which I only mean as to whether I shall go home to-morrow or stay here till Monday. . . . One would be glad to squeeze the last drop of balm out of one's appointed time. . . . I am very well but I seem to have somehow had a warning which never quite rang in my ears before. What seemed utterly vague and far away has in an odd way taken distinctness and come near.

'Dear Colleague—I feel it—I am growing old.'

London, June 25, '91.

'. . . My law court business has finished for the moment—for this case—the verdict has gone against us. Your letter was very welcome and interesting. The passage from Goethe is noble and inspiring. Is it not a little like the saying of *Brutus* in "Julius Cæsar" when he hastily wishes on the morning of the battle that one "might know the end of this day's business ere the end," and then calmly rebukes himself with the words—"but it sufficeth that the day will end and then the end is known."

'Oh! how I do wish one could keep to that mood of mind! I would if I could. Talking of Goethe, I may say that I have actually got the "Elective Affinities" and also the "Gibbon"—the "Gibbon" in seven volumes of Bohn's edition—and that I propose to bring them to you on Sunday.

'I liked your letter and am with you in all you say. . . . I should like a life of literary repose and quietness such as you describe—I feel that the time for fierce political or other emotion is gone. I should like to be quiet with books and literary work—to have done with politics—if one could. But I suppose "I'll no be graced so far"—as the old crone says of somebody—*Ravenswood* I think, in Scott's romance—and one must dree his weird.

'I am very anxious to read more of your story. Of course you must do it in your own way—in that way alone can it be well done from the artistic point of view. . . .'

'Alone? Yes one must be so "Alone on the broken spar, drowning out of sight—alone with the crowd applauding you," supposing they do applaud, which sometimes they do not. I have often spoken to you of what I call the passion of solitude—not the passion *for* solitude—oh, no—but the passion which comes of the sense that one is alone. . . . I have felt less of this lately than once I did. One gets used to things—one grows old. . . .' June 23, '91.

'A line to say how sorry I am to have missed you to-day. I had gone to the House of Commons for the first time—chiefly to attend a meeting about the evicted tenants—I got many kindly greetings from politicians of all shades. By the way, having met Colonel Saunderson at your house on Wednesday, I met him last night at a dinner at Mrs. Richard Chamberlain's. The Childers' were there—and Lulu Harcourt and Wilfrid Blunt and the Saundersons and some Unionists. I got next the wife of one of the Chamberlain brothers—I don't quite know which—a bright young Canadian with whom I had plenty of topics at once. She comes from Quebec—and I delight in Quebec—I shall see you at your dinner-party to-morrow. I thought the luncheon was very pleasant the other day. We will arrange about the Terrace when I see you to-morrow. I have not been very well to-day somehow—have had queer weakness and tendency to shiver—but it has all passed off. No, dear colleague, I did not for a moment think you were negligent of me. I assumed that you were busy about your new place and about going to Stanmore—and about your boys and Bradfield—and that you had not had time to write in the middle of a lot of goings and comings and looking after a new place and the rest. London, July 17.

'I have been busy in a variety of ways. I have got on my hands the payment of five thousand pounds, in conjunction with Parnell, for registration costs last year—we have taken the money conjointly from the Paris Fund—and it will involve a lot of correspondence and verifying of accounts and signing of cheques.

'I have been to the House to-day for a short time and received telegrams to assure me that William O'Brien and

John Dillon are both released from prison this morning and have gone unreservedly with us and against Parnell. I felt sure Dillon would, but was not quite certain about O'Brien. This I hope is practically the end of any serious struggle. It is a shame just now to tire you with political talk—but still I thought you would be glad to hear this much of politics.

'Don't trouble to answer this. . . . I do wish I could help you with your story. Perhaps I may be able to do so before you send it in.'

Daily News, Aug. 4, '91.

'I shall be delighted to go and see you at Springlands whenever you can arrange it. . . . I am sorry for your poet. He is one of the victims of life's most curious complexities. Scorned conventionality generally contrives to avenge itself. I dined to-day with Dillon and O'Brien and we had a long talk. Parnell is coming to Cheyne Gardens to see me to-morrow.'

Ray Mead Hotel, Boulter's Lock, Aug. 8.

'You will perhaps be a little surprised at receiving a letter from me with this address. We came here, almost on the impulse, last evening to spend two or three quiet days. I was weary of London, of the House of Commons, of the Irish Exhibition troubles, and was glad to escape if only for two or three days.

'Do you remember this hotel?—we took shelter there from the drenching rain that Sunday in last September when Campbell and you came down to Taplow to see us. . . . I enjoy this place. . . . I love the river, it soothes me. The sky last night was all stars: the look from Maidenhead bridge was lovely—we described it, you will remember, in "The Grey River," which gives it a charm of association for me, and you know how I revel in associations. I have an odd sort of feeling as if I never wanted to see London again—but I suppose that sort of feeling would never last very long. . . . I am reading "New Grub Street."[1] It deserves all the praise you give it. The realism is true and *terrible*. I am deeply interested in it.'

Aug. 13, '91.

'The Irish Exhibition is drawing to a crisis, and I don't quite know what to do—but it is of no use troubling you about that. "The Sensation Novel" is nearly done. I shall be glad when it is fairly off. It has dragged on so long and with so many interruptions that it is like a lot of patches badly stitched together. . . . Though the House is up, I have by no means got rid of politics. I had three long interviews to

[1] By George Gissing.

endure to-day—then the new Chilian envoy dined with us. He brought a letter of introduction to me from my old friend Patrick Egan who is U.S. minister in Chili. . . . Happily the Chilian envoy speaks English as well as you or I.'

The failure of the Irish Exhibition, to which allusion has already been made, and all the legal difficulty in which his purely patriotic connection with that disastrous enterprise involved him, laid a heavy burden upon Mr. McCarthy's later years. His copyrights had to be sacrificed in order to meet debts with which he had no concern beyond the giving of his name and services to the committee in the hope of furthering the interests of his country. Now, he writes concerning that business.

Aug. 17. '. . . I don't know why I did not tell you more about the Irish Exhibition. It was not in the least because I doubted of your interest and sympathy—it was rather perhaps because I feared it might trouble you. . . . I have had to explain that I could not possibly find £2000. They (the directors) then suggested with the advice of —— (who has acted as my adviser) that I should give them a written acknowledgment of my responsibility which will enable them to count me as one of themselves legally. . . . If I did not join with them in that way and pay in £2000, they would be compelled in law to take steps against me too. I don't know if this is at all intelligible. The point is that I have incurred a debt of £2000.'

Sept. 2, '91. '. . . I am sure you must be very busy just at present. When you have quite settled down, I shall hope to be asked to go and see you, but don't trouble till you have quite settled down. I am going to Yorkshire on Friday to spend a few days with the Dunnington-Jeffersons—do you remember ?—the friends of Nora Mason whom we met at some place near Cannes.'

Sept. 10, '91. '. . . We missed you much, dear Colleague, when the Rideings dined with us at the old familiar Kettner's—where I don't think you had dined before, since one night when the Drews were with us and you came, and Campbell was not able to turn up. That must be years ago. We had a pleasant little dinner-party. . . . I am engaged now on a Christmas story

for a man named Diprose. . . . It has to be sent in early next week. . . . I have accepted the pot-boiling arrangement —I seem to be getting deeper and deeper into the pot-boiling line. Well, I suppose I ought to be content—if only I can keep the pot boiling. . . . There is a good deal of political arrangement going on and it seems to me that I am seeing, or expecting to see, people every day about our political affairs.'

Cheyne Gardens, Sept. 14, '91.

'. . . I was ever so glad to get your letter. I knew of course that you would be immersed in all manner of perplexities. I am sure that Woodlands must be a delightful place, and—despite the drawbacks about posts and telegraphs and fishmongers—I shall be delighted to go and see you when you are settled down. Did I tell you that I had a long talk with Parnell here—in this study—the other night ? No, I did not, for it was Friday night and I have not written to you since. He telegraphed from Brighton to me asking if he could come and see me at eleven o'clock that night. He came accordingly and waited till half-past three—and kept his cab at the door all the while, then drove off to Euston to go by the early mail-train to Ireland. We had to discuss all manner of details about bills of costs for registration, and such-like, incurred while the party was still united—and which can only be paid out of a fund for which he and I are joint trustees. He was as friendly and familiar as if nothing whatever had occurred to divide us—and we smoked in intervals of work and drank whisky and soda—and I thought it dismal, ghastly and hideous—and I hate to have to meet him. But there is no help for it : and I daresay I shall have to see him again this week. . . .

'At the end of the week I am going to Dublin for a few days. We have to hold a series of meetings—private—of our executive council to arrange all our policy and plans for the coming time. I hope I shall not have to attend any public meetings but I do not suppose I shall be expected to do that. What we want is consultation and decision concerning funds of our organization and candidates and contests and all the rest. . . . I have begun to read Gissing's " Nether World." It is singularly powerful, and oh, so painful—and I fancy so true ! '

Sept. 20, '91.

'. . . Talking of first nights, I had a curious experience at a first night—*last* night we went to see the opening night of " Last Words," the new play brought out by the Daly Company. There was a tremendous house. The play was not

much in itself, but it was *all* Ada Rehan.—I went behind when all was done to see Miss Rehan and Daly, and there were some people there—Sir Henry Thompson and Miss Géneviève Ward among the rest. I had not seen Ada Rehan to speak to this time before. Think of my surprise when she ran up to me, threw her arms round my neck and kissed me before the assembled guests ! ! Then she prettily explained this unexpected demonstration of good feeling by telling me she had dreamed the night before I was dead—and she was so glad to see me living that she could not keep from giving me that warm welcome ! Was it not prettily done and prettily said ! But I meditated over it all the same. Dear Colleague—I am growing old—and the fact is recognised ! ! ! Well, never mind. It is time one should learn the fact.

'I hope you are getting over your removal troubles. Miss Géneviève Ward told me to send you her love. My mind went back somehow to a night in New York, when we went to a party up town somewhere and met her.—Do you remember the wanderings and explorings of that night ? . . .'

'. . . I enjoyed greatly my stay at your place.[1] The place itself is so beautiful—so quiet—so secluded—so entirely natural—the murmur of the woods is so sweet and soothing—the bracken is so plenteous—and I liked so much being with you all, even were there no woods and no bracken and no seclusion. You must ask me again before long. . . .' Oct. 1, '91.

'I am going off to North Lincolnshire to-morrow to speak at a meeting. . . . Your place must be delightful to-day. I like to think of you in the delightful green woods, good enough and secluded enough for the revels of Titania herself. Oct. 4.

'I have sent off an article for the *North American Review*. . . . Now I have begun a story for Tillotson. I am founding it on the story of a ring that Courtauld Thomson told me—he actually has the ring. If I find it coming out really good I shall keep it for some other mode of publication—perhaps for a one-volume novel. Good Heavens ! if I were a man of *any* means I would not write one single line that had not the inspiration of my own feeling and the approval of my own judgment. But what can one do ! the money is needed and offers are made, and so we shred ourselves away in this furnishing of pot-boilers. I chafe against it sometimes, but what

[1] Woodlands, in Hertfordshire, now in the possession of Charles Armitage, Esq.

is the use of chafing? Never mind this burst of grumbling. You understand it all perfectly. You will have heard before this reaches you the news which all but overwhelmed me to-day—the news of Parnell's death. I need not tell you how I felt about it. You would follow my feelings and understand them. You know what I thought of him—what friendship I had for him—how loyal I was to him, while loyalty was possible—and what a shock it was for me when loyalty was no longer possible, and I had to face the hard facts and turn resolutely away from him. You know all this. You know that my disappointment in him was one of the great uprooting shocks of my life. . . . I have had a hideously busy day—I say "hideously" in the most literal sense—for it has consisted in the seeing of interviewers from English and American newspapers—I had them by the score—and said the same formal platitude to each. I was to have gone down to Pembroke Lodge to see my dear old friend Lady Russell to-day and to spend the night there, but of course I have telegraphed to her that I could not leave town, and indeed she would understand that without a telegram from me. I must be on the spot. I do not know whom I may have to see. All the same, I was glad to get your letter, and please do not think that this tragic business has in the least diminished my sympathetic interest in your affairs. . . .'

Oct. 8, '91. '. . . I am deeply sorry for the death of my dear old friend John Pope Hennessy.[1]

'We were friends from very boyhood. I have just been writing a letter to his widow—think what a mournful piece of work it was. She was in this house not many days ago—came over to take her eldest boy back to his school. She was then uneasy about John's health, but not greatly alarmed. And now behold! I did not attempt any futile work of condolence. "Not all the preaching since Adam"—you know the lines—"has made death other than death."'

Oct. 13. '. . . I have been very busy for I have promised to write an article about Parnell for the *Contemporary*—and I have been writing about him for *Black and White*—and it is a labour to me. The theme distresses me—it has been too much on

[1] Sir John Pope Hennessy, formerly Governor of various British-Colonial dependencies; and upon his retirement from office he was elected for Parliament as a member of the Irish Nationalist Party.

my mind lately—even to-day the interviewers still keep coming. It has been all a trying time.

'When may I go and see you? Campbell talked of Sunday next. . . .'

'I have had an extraordinary letter from a man in Barcelona, a Spaniard called Don Z——. A year or two ago he invited me to Barcelona to attend some exhibition there—asking me to stay at his house and offering to pay my travelling expenses—out of sympathy with the Irish cause. I wrote to him a civil letter explaining that I could not go. Now he writes to say that he has seen that I propose to retire from the leadership. He asks me if this is owing to money difficulties—and says that, if it is, he is ready to open an account for me at his bankers which will maintain me and meet all my election expenses for the whole of my natural life!!! Or if my intended withdrawal is owing to failing health, he offers me the use of a châlet of his in the province of Barcelona and in a delightful climate where, he says, I and mine may reside, with the use of all his servants, until I get perfectly well. I think I had better acknowledge graciously and decline his remarkable offers—and write then in confidence to the British consul at Barcelona and ask him if he can tell me anything about the man. I have been in Barcelona, but only for a holiday, and don't remember having heard anything of my generous patron.'[1] Oct. 15, '91.

'. . . Saturday night Huntly and I went to the first performance of ——'s new play. It has been immensely praised in most of the papers, and it was undoubtedly clever and for the most part marvellously well played. But the subject was as old as the hills—the satire and the moral were still older—the people were unlike any human beings who ever lived on the earth—the pictures of society were absurd—the whole thing belonged to the region of extravagant farce—to the hot-poker and butter-slide realm of fancy. But, as outrageous farce, it is undoubtedly clever—and as I said, it was admirably acted—most drolly farced. I sat next to a very eminent critic who told me he thought it had not the elements of a play in it—and who in his paper declares it to be the very triumph of dramatic art!' Oct. 26.

'. . . I suppose I shall not have a chance of seeing you on Oct. 28.

[1] Nothing further came of this magnificent offer.

Friday when you come to town. Don't think of putting yourself out in the least. I am going at twelve o'clock that day to see the laying of the foundation stone of Daly's new theatre—Ada Rehan is to lay the stone—which is at least appropriate, as she will have to support the weight of that theatre when it is built. Are you going to luncheon at Sir George Bowen's on Sunday? He called yesterday and left a letter telling us he had asked Froude and also you and Campbell. Alas, I can't accept either of your kind invitations—and I should so much like to meet Dr. Sullivan. The condition of things is this: We have taken a nice little house at Westgate and arranged to go down early on Monday. Unluckily, I had made long ago quite a cluster of engagements—political almost all of them—in London the week after next—so I want to get all next week by the sea. With that purpose, I refused yesterday an invitation to luncheon on Tuesday and two dinner-parties—one Wednesday and one Saturday in next week—on the grounds that I am going out of town for health's sake. To-day I feel queer, shaky, nervous, unwilling to work or do anything—and I have to go to the *Daily News* to-night. I think it is all nothing but being in town too long and sticking too much to sedentary work day after day. Yesterday I had three political interviews—all on perfectly legitimate and even important business such as any reasonable leader of a party would be expected to attend to. But all this with literary work and newspaper work is a little too much. I feel that I must get away—and I can't go abroad, because, so long as I remain in the leadership, I must be in touch of London and Dublin. . . .'

Athelstane Terrace, Westgate-on-Sea, Nov. 25, '91.

'We are having a quiet time here. Except for the actual inhabitants I do not believe there is a soul in the place. The weather is cold but fine and the places round very pretty, and the sea would be charming if by some mysterious and local property of Nature, the tide were not always out. We take long walks—and, having been here not quite three days yet, I already feel as if I had never lived anywhere else and could never come away from this place. Yesterday we walked to Birchington and went into the dear little churchyard and saw Dante Rossetti's grave. You will easily imagine that my mind went back to that other day when you and I were there—shortly before I went out to Algeria. To-day I walked into

Margate and sat on the pier—where it was quite warm and sunny—and I looked at the Royal York Hotel, whereof I have many memories. I confess I enjoy this mooning about, it suits my temperament. I am already much better for the air of this place and the sea and the walks. I work a good deal. I do nothing but walk and lounge till after sunset, and then I settle down to my "Dictator" and to letter-writing till dinner-time—we make it very late here—and then I sit up a little later than the rest and read to myself—and after all this, I still get to bed at an unusually early hour. I like it all very well so far. It suits my physical condition and turn of mood just at present. It gives me an idea of being ever so far out of London—at the other end of the world—done with everything—and, after a year or so of incessant moral and mental strain and excitement, I feel as if I had not much desire left in me.

'I don't know whether you will understand this, but it is a genuine setting out of my present feelings. . . .

'I write now to enclose a letter from a young American woman who wants our permission to try and dramatise "The Right Honourable" for New York. Personally, I have not the slightest objection nor I suppose have you.'

'I think Mrs. C——'s reading of your past very curious and interesting—and she certainly seems to have made some remarkably lucky hits. If she is the Mrs. C—— I know I shall some day ask her to try what she can do with *me*. Hardly ever has a good stroke fallen to me in the way of having my character or my past or my future told me by hand or by any other means of discovery whatever. Apparently, you had the same sort of fortune about me when you submitted my handwriting to the ordeal of an intelligence which served so singularly well in regard to yourself and others. London, Nov. 27, '91.

'I am afraid I wrote you rather a dispirited sort of letter the other day. I spoke of having no particular desire to go back to London. I did not mean of course that I did not want to see the people I care about in London. But I have a sense of failure about everything connected with London—about public life—about all sorts of things—and I fancy I am coming to the time when a career is seen rather as a retrospect than a prospect, and the feeling is upon me that I have had enough of it, and that there is nothing much to come any more. So

it often occurs to me that it would not be by any means an undesirable thing to be out of the living, striving, and active world altogether and to write books in some quiet place and regard all the rest as retrospect. This mood is closing down upon me more and more. I do not see any reason for fighting against it—on the contrary, I see almost every reason for encouraging and acting upon it.

CHAPTER XVIII

FROM A SICK ROOM

The following letters found me about to start for the South of France:

London, Jan. '92.

'. . . I dined at Admiral Englefield's on Wednesday—it was a small and very pleasant party. One interesting feature of it was that a young alligator—a pet of Sir Edward Englefield's—was set loose on the dinner table, and crawled about quite tamely. He is only about eighteen inches long and is five months old—and will probably grow to twenty-five feet! He took to Charlotte greatly and sat contentedly on her shoulder. On Thursday I dined with the Dunnington-Jeffersons and went with them to "Venice." The spectacle is good, but the streets did not remind us of anything we knew in Venice—and it was very cold.

'Did you know Lady Sandhurst? I am very sorry for her death. I knew her well and liked her well. . . .'

Westgate, Jan. '92.

'Some letter or letters of mine must surely have miscarried, dear colleague, if you did not receive one for a whole week. Never in my life, since I came to know you well did I let a whole week pass without writing to you. A letter of some importance which I sent to the *Daily News* miscarried and I fear the post here is rather wretched. I dread to think of your journey to Brussels in weather like this. . . . My friend, you are not strong enough for these enterprises. The news of the death of the poor young Duke of Clarence is very sad. Personally, of course, the death of Cardinal Manning touches me more. He was a kind friend to me and was, I think, the best and most unselfish man I ever knew—

except, perhaps, Stuart Mill—but the death of the poor young Duke just on the eve of his marriage with his young bride comes home to every heart. I did not know him even by sight—but one can feel things.'

Westgate, Jan. '92. '. . . As to the Cannes visit—I should like it dearly, but it depends altogether on the Irish Question. If I can get out of the leadership, I shall be comparatively free—except as regards the necessity of making a living. But suppose I cannot get out of it? If a man is of any real service to a national cause, is not his place there—as much as that of poor Tommy Atkins who is sent out to the war and paid a few pence a day? I have been thinking of this a good deal lately. I am all alone here just now. I do not object to the solitude. The weather is simply delightful: the sun is brilliant: the skies are blue: the sea is opal: the sunsets are bewitching: the air is a little chill: but nothing to speak of—and on the whole I ought to be a very happy person. . . .'

London, Jan. 18, '92. 'Do you remember the imprint of this typewriter? I wrote you many a letter on it in old days. . . . My more modern instrument is down at Westgate. . . . I came up for political and literary—I mean journalistic—business. And I have to attend the funeral service for the Cardinal for whom I felt such devotion as I feel for no man now living. The dinner at the National Liberal Club on Wednesday is put off in consequence of the death of the poor Prince. I am free that night for dinner if you are in London and could have me.

'We went to the lying-in-state of the Cardinal to-day. I wish we had not gone. The crowd was immense and had to be regulated by an enormous police force—"Pass on, please, pass on"—even in the chamber of death. It was cruelly disenchanting—quite like a show. . . .'

Jan. 25, '92. 'You are in Cannes before now—and I have been thinking of you—as you reached the old familiar ground and saw the red hills and the outlines of the Esterels. And I am thinking too how I shall feel the next time I enter the Cannes station. . . . I could sit and think for hours if there was nothing else to do in life but sitting and recalling memories and bidding old or recent associations to pass before one in ghostly review. Happily, or at least luckily—I have a few other things to do and I shall straightway turn to the making of "copy" when

I have written you these few lines which are meant to be a sort of welcome to Cannes.'

'. . . I wonder if my letter to you was the first you received in Cannes. . . . I have been delighted by the Rossendale victory. It is the crowning mercy . . . it is the death-knell of our opponents. Personally, I only feel some little pang of regret that I may have to leave the field before the victory is won—the victory on which I staked so much—for which I lost so much. But I see no help for it. I remember saying to you years and years ago, after I first came to know you, that I should like of all things to end up on some battle-field in the cause of Ireland. How I wish it could have happened so. . . .' Jan. 30, '92.

'I have just come back from the House where we have had a debate and I have been making a speech—the first I have made for quite a long time. The reason Dillon opposed me—the chief reason at least—was that he and a few of his friends wanted to have a leader who was identified with the "Plan of Campaign," and the great majority of the party desired, apart from all other and more personal reasons, to have a leader who was not actually mixed up with the Plan of Campaign. I am glad to say that some of the strongest men concerned in the Plan of Campaign voted for me, and afterwards publicly congratulated me on my re-election. It was simply a sad mistake on the part of some of Dillon's friends—a profound miscalculation of their strength with the party. However, we are all good friends again. I don't know if you will understand all these intricacies of Irish politics, but I think you will. You have been inside the movement a good deal! London, Feb. 12, '92.

'I do not suppose there is much chance of my going to Cannes this year. I could not under present conditions leave the House of Commons until Easter. I have been literally immersed in political business of late. We hold Committee meetings for our purpose two or three times a day—and except for the interruption to my literary work I think it is rather good for me. It leaves me no time to meditate or fall into pools of melancholy. . . . I have for the present got my work chalked out for me. I must stick to it. I do not give a thought—have no time to give a thought to the future. I have all sorts of public meetings to attend—and

dinner-parties are setting in. This is not, perhaps, the kind of life one might have idealized for himself, but one's ideal of life must ever and always be an ideal. . . .'

London, Feb. 17, '92.

'My literary work is not getting on, and, by consequence, I am not getting in any money, nor seem likely to get in any very soon. The *Daily News* articles are the only work I can regularly do—and very hard it is for me to get even those done with all the incessant Irish business in the House and the meetings of Committees that I have to attend. To add to one's troubles, the weather is *fiendishly* cold. I do not think I ever felt days in London so cold as to-day and yesterday. . . .

'. . . We have given up our little Westgate House and come back to London finally. On the whole we had some enjoyment out of Westgate, but I don't quite believe in any English winter resort. Yet we had some lovely days and I liked the loneliness. . . .

'I got back to London yesterday morning, and the House opens to-morrow—and hard fate has again imposed the leadership on me. I *could* not refuse under such conditions, but the prospect as regards my other work is dark enough. It is useless to look backward or forward. One has simply to hold on and take each day as it comes.'

House of Commons, London, Feb. 25, '92.

'. . . I have been working very hard on politics in this House and out of it. . . . Mere literature is still thrust in the background. I feel somehow as if I were turned into a piece of machinery. I no longer grumble over the putting off of my literary work—which I love. I take it with a stolid composure. I see how lugubrious the look-out is as regards my personal fortunes—and I only feel I cannot help it—I don't care. There! You have a perfect description of my mood of mind! The strain, the struggle, the melancholia, are gone and I am as unemotional on these subjects as the parish pump could be. Now I have told you all about myself. . . . I have not seen Campbell since you left. I was at a pleasant dinner-party at Lord Wentworth's last night and saw the famous picture of Lord Byron—his grandfather. Lecky and his wife were there—they were both very friendly to me. I am going to Cambridge on Saturday and Sunday to propagate the gospel of Home Rule. Write and tell me your experiences: and be sure that however I may resemble in other ways the

parish pump I shall not be stolid about anything that concerns you.'

'I made on Balfour's Irish Local Government Bill the most successful speech I think that I ever made in this House: and it was only a quarter of an hour in length. I knew it was a success while I was making it—I could not help knowing it—the House made it very clear to me. And after the kindly fashion of Parliament, I got lots of congratulations afterwards. I had been so long without speaking on any matter of importance that the sensation was new to me. . . .' House of Commons, Feb. 29, '92.

'. . . You are lucky not to be here just now, for we are enduring the coldest weather that has come at the same time of year for twenty-two years—at least so the statistics tell us, and our own sensations tell us yet more keenly. One hardly seems to be living at all: it seems to be some stony kind of half-existence. I lead a dull and humdrum sort of life. I am in the House all day and great part of the night. I had two long conferences with Gladstone lately—one last Friday when I met him in the lobby, and he carried me off to his private room in the House to talk over the prospects—the other yesterday, when I brought Sexton and Dillon to join in the conference. Yesterday, we spent two hours in conversation. He is full of hope and spirits—confident of a big majority at the general election—confident that he can carry Home Rule—and declared himself prepared to go as far in Home Rule "as any of you three will go." We had, and are still to have, some discussion on matters of detail. But he quite convinced Dillon and Sexton that he is just as ardent a Home Ruler as either of them. "Understand this," he said to us earnestly as we were leaving him, "that from you three gentlemen I have absolutely no reserves—no, none whatever." London, March 8, '92.

'He is in excellent physical health but is unfortunately getting very deaf and knows it. So it was not all humdrum the life at the House—I could not call these conferences humdrum—could I? . . .

'. . . I was at luncheon at Lady Dorothy's on Sunday and took leave of Sir Henry Wolff who is going to Madrid. There were some pleasant people there. Saturday night we went to see Beerbohm Tree's "Hamlet." I liked it much in many ways. It is not strong, but it is sweet, poetic and tender—a piece of really artistic work. I have not yet seen Oscar

Wilde's play—indeed except for "Hamlet," I have seen nothing for this long time. . . .'

London, Mar. 11, '92. '. . . Do not come back here too soon. For nearly a week back we have been half buried in snow which came on the heels of the cruellest frost. I think if I had my way I would not take the trouble to go out of England at all, unless I might remain away until, at the earliest, the first of May. . . .

'I have been at the House all day. I was there all yesterday—and the day before. I live in the House—if that can be called living. I had an engagement at a public dinner yesterday of the English municipalities, where I was to have made a speech—but at the last moment, I had to telegraph that I could not possibly go. . . . I am as stony as usual—shall not thaw until the frost goes and the skies are clear. Then I shall reconsider my position and find out whether I am half alive or half dead.'

House of Commons, Mar. 24, '92. 'I want this to reach you on the morning of your birthday, dearest colleague—to greet you with the heartfelt wish that you may have many more happier returns of the day. I well remember your last birthday, which we spent together at Grasse. . . .

'I have been rushing about to dinner-parties and public meetings. The rest of my life, I pass in this House. We are back to bitterly cold east winds and grim grey skies again. . . . There is so much coughing in the House that you might fancy yourself in a hospital ward. . . . Do not trust yourself back here until we have a kindlier atmosphere to welcome you. . . .

Mar. 27, '92. 'This actually is your birthday—this twenty-seventh day of March—and by a somewhat strange coincidence, it is the anniversary of my marriage and also of my first election to the House of Commons. So the day brings me a good many associations with it. The day opened here in a thick reddish fog which hung about until nearly four in the afternoon—fancy! at the end of March!

'. . . We are having committee meetings almost every day to prepare for the general elections—which can't be very far off—to select candidates and arrange about constituencies and see to the getting of funds, and all that sort of thing. How far away "all that sort of thing" must seem to you out at Cannes!'

April saw me back in London. The House was sitting: the air was full of talk about the next general election and the promise of the Liberals' return to office and Mr. Gladstone's pledge to bring in a bill for Home Rule. It soon became clear to me that the strain of politics was telling severely on my literary colleague. An electioneering trip to Ireland brought on cold and rheumatism, and a few weeks after my return he writes again from a sick-room.

May '92. '. . . I have seen Tanner [1] and he says there is nothing seriously wrong and that we need not call in Robson Roose. But he insists that I must keep to my bedroom for some few days—unless the weather changes. . . . I have passed a quiet day. I had not much pain. I got up after Tanner had gone and dressed and had my typewriter brought up—and worked off an article for the *Daily News*. I am going to work at several political letters after this. . . . Write to me, dear colleague. . . . I shall be a prisoner for some days yet and shall be glad of a stream of light. Not that your stream of light is any the less welcome in freedom than in captivity.

'I am better to-day—the pain is less, and indeed, when I am not moving, is not much to speak of and I have been sleeping fairly well at night—although the pain oddly enough is worse at night than in the day. I do not on the whole much like this enforced rest. I have had so much stress of political work of late that there seems a certain relief in the having to lie down most of the day and in being absolutely prevented from going to any meeting, committee, debate or division! I did some work at my novel yesterday and to-day and this is a marked improvement, for when I tried such work on Wednesday I found the twinges of pain so frequent that it was impossible for me to keep my attention fixed on the story or talk of the personages.'

The writing of fiction under the stress of pain was, nevertheless, an easier task than that of guiding the destinies of the Nationalists. Even in the face of the great measure there seemed no hope of a united Irish party. The Parnellites

[1] Dr. Tanner, a member of the Irish Party.

were still irreconcilable, and there was a bitter controversy going on about this time concerning the management of the Nationalist organ, the *Freeman's Journal*. Some members of the committee wished the paper to be conducted on less political lines, and Messrs. Dillon and O'Brien threatened to resign from the committee unless a certain resolution was carried. Mr. McCarthy was urged to resign also and to give up the hopeless struggle of reconciling conflicting elements. Yet, thankful as he might have been for such a solution of his difficulties, it was not possible that a man of his loyalty and integrity of purpose should take that means of escape. No, the soldier must at any cost remain true to his flag. Many a time did he express himself in these words when talking over the situation with me. I was perhaps more closely in his confidence at that period than any of his political friends, and I had at least the merit of being a safe and disinterested confidante. He writes to me at Woodlands about this time:

London, May 17, '92.

'I was greatly interested in your account of your lonely wanderings and your solitary lodgment. I can understand the feeling of content and even of joy which you must have felt in the peacefulness, the freedom from disturbance and worry, the woods, the skies and the wind. I have been going on well and am to make my first adventure at walking out to-morrow—if it be fine. I am all but certain we shall get the house in Eaton Terrace—we shall scheme out a new joint novel there. I like Mrs. Lynn Linton's letter—it is so friendly, so sympathetic, so full of faith, so touching. It is quite like her. It is something to have won so much sympathy, and indeed, she is a true good woman. I have had rather a political sort of day. There is a fierce quarrel going on in Dublin about the amalgamation with the *Freeman's Journal* and I have been pelted with a shower of telegrams and have had a succession of long visits from members of the party. I *cannot* compose the quarrel—there is so much sensitiveness, so much jealousy, so much rancour, so much passion, so much

hysteria—women are not the only hysterical creatures in this world. I am tired. In the quietude of the night I will think out a title or two for your book—it will relieve me to get my thoughts off politics.'

As regards the *Freeman's Journal* the difficulty was staved off. The malcontents realised at last that only ruin of the cause could result from this internal strife—a second disruption of the party, a new leader—or no leader at all, and an inevitable loss of seats at the coming general election bringing convincing proof to the English allies that Ireland was totally unfit for self-government.

I know that at this time Mr. McCarthy's most fervent desire was to quit the arena and go back to a quiet literary life. But the staunch soul of the man could not sanction what he would have considered desertion from the post of duty. And all the time his health was failing and his hand getting less fit to grip the reins! It seemed a curious realisation of my prophecy written to him from Royat a few years before. We often spoke of that. No matter. There was nothing for it now but to fight on. His thoughts turned longingly to the quietude of our green glades in Hertfordshire.

Cheyne Gardens, May '92.

'I should so like to be with you at Woodlands to-morrow . . . it must be delightful to be there just now, and I should so love to wander about those woods. My wanderings at present are a little circumscribed. Roose has been here and tells me I am to wander forth on Wednesday, but not to wander beyond the range of Cheyne Gardens. I am to walk a few yards up and down until I get tired, and then he is to come later and tell me how the desperate expedition has agreed with me. Then if all be well I may be allowed to get on to the embankment on the following day—and if that heroic task be safely accomplished who can say how far the next expedition may not extend? . . .

'I have been doing a good deal of my story to-day. I wish

it were finished and off my mind. It has turned out something so utterly different from what I intended it to be—and now there is no time to improve it. It bears all the marks of the distracted and fragmentary way in which it has been written. . . .

'My Swedish manipulator has been here and I have been talking to him about modern Swedish novels and dramas. He says they are steeped in pessimism—as indeed I know from the few I have read in German translations. He thinks this an artistic fault, but he acknowledges to be so much of a pessimist himself that he says if he had no one depending on him in this world, he would certainly try his chance in some other. . . .'

Cheyne Gardens, '92. '. . . My two doctors had a talk over me to-day—I am much better I should say—and I believe will be prepared when the time comes—if it comes at all—to sign a certificate declaring that I must not contest any election in person. I have been working at the "Dictator"—oh, you never read such rubbish as what I have been doing to-day—not the least in the world like my usual way. I hope I shall never again have to spin off such trash against time—for money.'

May 18. 'I have made my first step across the threshold and walked —quite a long way, oh, I should say fully ten yards down Cheyne Gardens towards the river! I started with a wild audacious hope of reaching the embankment and looking on the river—but I was too rash. Before I had got half way down Cheyne Gardens I felt that my great object henceforth must be to get back. I was leaning on a stout iron-shod stick that I had picked up in Algeria and it took all the stoutness of that stick aided by some help from Charlotte with many an occasional pause by the way—to enable me to accomplish the return home. I seem to grow accustomed to this room, I was inhabiting it just the same sort of way this time last year—the influenza time. I don't dislike it so much by day. But at night—when the pain wakens up and says "Come now, you mustn't keep asleep, you must wake up and let us have a stinging time together"—then I don't like it. Did you ever read in a collection of stories called "Tales of the Genii' a story of a certain merchant Abdullah who had in his bedroom a great chest out of which came every night a loathly hag to torment him? I feel sometimes a little like that luckless creature. . . .

I have had various visitors—chiefly about politics—have been interrupted many times in the writing of this letter and am tired. I wonder when you are coming to town?' . . .

'. . . The pain is in a certain sense like a nightingale and appears to waken up when reasonable people want to go to sleep. However I have not let the day go uselessly by for, albeit sleepy, I have contrived to work at my "Dictator." Your little table has been an immense comfort to me. . . . It is useful for meals. Oh, so comfortable and perfect for writing. I intend even after I get well to use it for much of my ordinary political correspondence—so that I can lie in a arm-chair and in that comfortable position get through my work. T. P. O'Connor was here to-day for a long time—about politics—and he greatly admired the simplicity and convenience of the little structure. Thanks for the lovely azaleas—now they were *azaleas*, were they not?—which were brought to me in the carriage to-day. We had a delightful drive—M—— and the elderly lady and I. We drove through and round Hyde Park and then they brought me home. I wanted them to come and have tea with me, but they thought they had better get back to Norfolk Square. M. tells me that you are practically alone at Woodlands, and I told her that I very much wished we were all there.' May '92.

'I wonder if you got my telegram. Are you wondering what happened to me? I know you would not put down my absence to any forgetfulness or want of interest or change of purpose or stupid losing of a train—you would I know think only of political pressure or ill-health. It *was* ill-health but only in a small sort of way. I woke up this morning feeling utterly weak and weary—not sick or in pain of any sort—but so weak and weary that I seemed to have no wish left in the world but that of lying down and remaining where I was. Then I began to pull myself together and think over things. I was longing to go down to you—longing to hear the voice of the woods—and I knew that I *could not go*. At one o'clock I got up. Then I found that it was hopeless, I could not have gone to King's Cross Station to save the State. All this observe is new to me, until two years ago I simply did, without for one moment thinking about it, just whatever I wanted to do. Now I can't. This trouble of to-day was purely and altogether physical. Nothing whatever had happened in politics or June 6, '92.

private life to put me out. Of course I do feel certain troubles of the ignoble and pecuniary kind contracting and darkening around me of late—but I really do not take these to heart—to very heart—they do not touch one's inner soul. Give me time, and I shall bring them all right. But there is the question "Give me time." Suppose the time should not be given. That is one reason why I thought seriously to-day when I woke up and found I could not go to you.'

June 7, '92. 'I am much better. The curious unexplainable collapse has apparently worked itself out. What a depressed and depressing letter I wrote to you yesterday. I was like a child who had looked forward to and lost a treat.'

London, Sunday night, June 19, '92. 'I am sorry—very sorry—I cannot go to Bradfield for the Greek play,[1] but it is hopeless. I have to see ever so many people to-morrow.

'I have to see the Grand Old Man in an informal sort of way and to arrange for a regular conference with him and some of my colleagues and some of his, early on Tuesday. I have been tearing round and seeing people for great part of the day and being seen by people—and I have had to write a leader and lots of letters. I went to a luncheon at Mrs. Coleridge Kennard's—that was my one social performance—and I went to see Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice about his standing for Deptford and our supporting him there. I suppose there will be very few quiet intervals with me for the next few days.'

Cheyne Gardens, June 30, '92. 'I have been tearing round a good deal for the last day or two—on electioneering affairs. I spent some hours in the City yesterday in banks—about some funds we are getting from Sydney, Australia—five thousand pounds—to help us fight our elections. I had to go and be identified and then to arrange about the quickest way of transferring from one account to another account—and so on, to get the money over to Dublin as soon as possible. To-day I am sitting at home and receiving telegrams—I really cannot otherwise describe my function. Early in the day I drove over to see Roose.—Later on I am to dine with De Fonblanque—later still, to go to the *Daily News*. There I shall have to write on Gladstone's Mid-Lothian speech —his first speech—and I shall get home I suppose about three to-morrow morning. All this is rather a prosaic sort of business,

[1] To see the Greek play at Bradfield College, where my boys were.

and will make you the better understand how much I enjoyed a quiet talk with you the other day.

'I do not know what you have been doing this last day or two—except that I know you were going to the Academy Soirée. I wonder if you did go and whether you liked it. Charlotte and I went to Toole's Theatre—he sent us stalls—to see "Walker, London." I thought it very amusing, clever and bright—it was daintily mounted and very prettily acted. It was a great relief to me after the daily stress and strain of looking after electioneering work, which indeed does get on the nerves somewhat hard, especially when you are not very well. So I enjoyed the little piece.

'I am again writing from the *Daily News* Office. I have had a busy day, including two long interviews, an hour and more each—one from the correspondent of the *New York Herald*, and from the correspondent of the *New York World*.

'I wonder when I can get to see you. I am almost afraid of suggesting any day lest something of a political kind should intervene. I think it very likely that when Gladstone comes to town he may want to see me—and I should have to give up anything for that. I am growing weary of being pent up in London. I want air—air—air!'

CHAPTER XIX

MAKING AN ADMINISTRATION

Woodlands, the country-house to which Mr. McCarthy so often alludes, was an unpretentious little place we had taken in Hertfordshire—a sort of early Victorian cottage, with rambling additions, set in a hundred acres or so of real woodland with bracken and anemones and cuckoos and nightingales and bits of glade and dell, where one might fancy oneself a hundred miles from London instead of only fifteen. This, with an adjoining wood, in which we tried to rear a few pheasants, made a delightful rambling-ground full of all manner of unexpected delights and absolutely closed in from the world outside.

Woodlands is associated in my mind with Mr. McCarthy almost as definitely as the old Northamptonshire farmhouse, where we schemed out our first collaboration novel. Not that we did any joint literary work at Woodlands, but because of our many walks and talks on political matters—it was a relief to him, I am sure, to tell me of the worries—and because of his intense joy in the bursting green in spring, and sense of remoteness from party strife, which he said the trees gave him. He was usually one of the little circle which gathered round us for informal week-ends—good talkers some of them; and many were the literary and artistic discussions in which he was at his best, and many the stories

that he could always cap with one better. . . . Indeed, looking back, that little house in the woods seems to me an abode of pleasantness, and I, in especial, loved it because my boys were so happy there.

Mr. McCarthy writes from London :

Cheyne Gardens, July 3, '92.

'I have been writing a leader on Gladstone's speech at Glasgow yesterday. I wish I were with you now in the woods—oh how I should enjoy the woods and the pleasure of resting ! The day here is glowing and gloriously hot—I have been out for a short time—but I have lots of political correspondence to take up—and so I can't properly enjoy the weather. But I should enjoy it at Woodlands, if I had the chance.'

Cheyne Gardens, July 11, '92.

'I had a visit from a delegation of Irish-Americans sent over here with the project of trying to bring about peace between the two contending parties in the Irish National ranks. I fancy the elections will soon settle that question very conclusively.

'I had a curious experience last evening. Two people dined with us, a man and a woman. We drank claret only—I mention this fact as an important preliminary. We laughed and talked a great deal. I remember nothing after we left the dining-room—no, nothing whatever ! It seems that I talked and laughed just the same as before. Then our guests went away and I announced that I was going to bed. Charlotte asked me why I went so early and I said that I was tired. She asked me if I would not have, as I always have, a glass of whisky and Salutaris before going to bed, and I refused. Then I went to bed—and she says, not shewing in my manner the slightest peculiarity whatsoever. But I remember nothing about it. I got to bed apparently all right—left all my things in their accustomed places, woke up early this morning perfectly well—indeed feeling better than I had done for months—but having no recollection whatever of anything that happened after I left the dining-room.—Charlotte tells me that up to the end I was perfectly self-collected and full of talk, and that she came to my bedroom a little later on, and that we talked together on various topics for a short time and she noticed no peculiarity of manner whatever. I was afraid when I woke up and begun to pull

myself together that I might have fainted and caused consternation in that way—but no, nothing of the kind. In fact, nobody noticed anything except that they were a little amazed at my unwonted anxiety to go to bed early. Is it not curious ? '

London, July 13, '92.

'I have been quite well ever since Sunday and have had no repetition or threat of that curious lapse of memory. I fancy it was nothing but the effect of recent overstrain on the mind. Still it does—as the immortal bard would say—give us pause.'

Cheyne Gardens, Monday night.

'After I wrote you to-day, I had a wire from Campbell asking me to dine at your house to-morrow, Tuesday, evening to meet Major Jameson and I at once telegraphed my acceptance of the invitation.

'I spent the greater part of this day in books and politics. The Irish Nationalist party have got already, from America and Australia, eleven thousand pounds, with promises from America of much more—and it all comes in cable orders to me and I have to go down to the various banks and go through all manner of formalities, perfectly simple and familiar to any ordinary man, but bewildering to *me*. Then I have to make arrangements for the transfer of the monies to Dublin—and then I have to send off the telegrams and cables and letters—and how easy and natural it would all come to Campbell—and how difficult it is to me ! Then I have to be identified at some of these banks, for they won't hand five thousand pounds across the counter to anybody who comes in and says "Look here, I am Justin McCarthy, and I want that money." To-day my vanity—you know it is a strong point with me—was touched. I went to a bank where I had never been before and I meekly asked if I could see the manager. The answer was that he was engaged just then, but only for a moment, and would I take a chair. I took a chair—a seat, that is to say—I had not yet produced a card, and then from a far-off desk, a very good-looking young man approached me and modestly asked: "Mr. Justin McCarthy, would you do me the favour of giving me your autograph ?" Do you know that I really felt gratified ? '

In July, the elections were in full swing. It soon became evident that Mr. Gladstone would come in with but a

small majority. Mr. McCarthy writes, however, in good spirits :

'My election is on to-day—but they are not to begin the counting of the votes before to-morrow, and I do not suppose I shall know the result before I see you. But I think I am quite safe. My colleague in the southern district of the county, Edward Blake, the Canadian, has been elected, you will have seen perhaps, by an enormous majority over a Tory landlord. . . . I hope you have been enjoying the open air and the green woods. Things go on with me very much in the usual sort of way. I am going to see "The Mountebanks" to-night. Did I tell you that I saw "The Statue of the Commander" the other night ?—a marvellous piece of acting —humorous, grotesque, pathetic, ludicrous, terrible. . . .' Cheyne Gardens, July '92.

The elections were over, and the Grand Old Man had come out of them hopeful though scarcely triumphant, for his majority was slenderer than his adherents had anticipated. There remained now but the opening of Parliament ; the formal defeat of the Tories ; and then would begin the business of forming the Liberal Cabinet, to be followed by the introduction of Mr. Gladstone's second Home Rule Bill.

'You would be amused if you were here at the number of letters I receive each day from Arnold Morley on behalf of the Grand Old Man. The tremendous energy of the Grand Old Man shews itself sometimes in an impatience of any delay in the arrangements for a series of conferences. Now these conferences are conducted, usually on our part by Sexton, Dillon and myself. Dillon had to go back to Ireland last night for a day or two. Sexton is in Ireland still. A meeting is desired on Monday if possible—but Dillon can't be back on Monday—and I have not as yet got into touch with Sexton. The Grand Old Man is very anxious and very impatient—in his kindly, exuberant way—and all for the sake of the great Irish cause—and he does not quite—*quite* understand that Irish members like Sexton and Dillon have ever so much work to look after in their own country. I tell you this partly because I think it will interest and amuse you as a glimpse of living politics, and partly because it will explain Cheyne Gardens, July 30, '92.

why I can't go to see you to-morrow. I can't stir an inch out of town for the next few days.'

Cheyne Gardens, Tuesday, Aug. 2, '92.

'The talk with Gladstone is put off till to-morrow; Dillon, Sexton and I then go to see him—and on the result of the interview a good deal will depend—not that I feel the slightest doubt of everything being satisfactory. I shall wire to you at once in some vague and general terms which you will perfectly understand and, of course, naming no names. I am positively assured that it is not safe to tell political tales too clearly through the medium of the wires.

'The House will meet on Thursday for the election of the Speaker, and to begin the swearing in of members—and we shall hold a meeting of our party for the election of Chairman, Secretaries and Whips. I do not anticipate any opposition this time as regards the chairmanship—but neither did I anticipate it last time. Last time however must have carried its admonition along with it. I am in a curious position. I *long* to be out of the leadership—and yet I am compelled to wish that I may be re-elected—for the simple reason that I do not see any chance of the party accepting unanimously anyone else. I am getting all right in health, and, for the moment, having got paid for my last novel, I am not in particular want of money—I am in a better position therefore than I was in February—and I want to fight the fight out. But you will quite understand how absolutely consistent is this wish with the other feeling that if, through no failure of my own, I were not re-elected, I should give a sigh of relief.

'I have been seeing all sorts of people lately about politics. I had a long talk with Edward Blake of Canada yesterday. Everyone watches his entry into Parliament with great interest. I feel perfectly bashful at having to be the leader of such a man. He was the leader of the Liberal Opposition in the Dominion Parliament of Canada for many years and is one of the finest parliamentary debaters I ever heard. Now the question is, how he will turn out in the new atmosphere—into which, being the son of Irish parents, he comes only for the sake of serving the Irish cause.'

The promised telegram arrived later in the day:

'Long talk: good spirits: regret small majority: arrangements quite satisfactory.'

'I wish I could have written to you after the interview with Gladstone, but I was terribly pressed for time, and I had engaged myself improvidently, some days before, to a dinner-party with our friend Mr. Bohm, where I met Campbell. Nothing could have been more satisfactory than our talk with Gladstone. I shall tell you all about it when we meet. Some of it was rather touching—when he spoke of the fact that the small majority renders it impossible that the Home Rule Bill can pass the House of Lords next Session and that therefore he has little hope of being able to see the end of the struggle; but he assured us that so long as he is on earth he will fight our battle for us. To-day I have been in the House of Commons at the re-election of the Speaker; and then—for hours—at a meeting of our party. I was re-elected without any manner of opposition. To-night I was at the dinner given by the Eighty Club to my friend and my new follower Edward Blake, at which he made a most statesmanlike speech —and now, at last, I have got home.' London, Aug. 4, '92.

'. . . Our decisive debate opens on Monday—and, as at present arranged with our grand old friend, I am to speak that day and to propound to him a series of pre-arranged questions—to which he will give pre-arranged and satisfactory replies. It would amuse you to hear how it is all planned out, as if by the manager of a theatre. Of course we may have altered plans but they will be altered by previous arrangement. Aug. 5, '92.

'I spent hours at a meeting of our party to-day and shall spend hours there to-morrow. Needless to say I don't do any work. But the session—this short session—will finish next week, and then I shall have a respite.'

'. . . I am all right again. . . . I don't know what momentary weakness or faintness overcame me to-day.[1] I enjoyed myself much at your house and was only too sorry to leave it. I find the *Pall Mall* circular awaiting me (requesting the views of certain novelists on the English drama) and I shall answer it in my own way—not quite your way! I regard the modern English drama as for the most part below contempt. And I think the fault is not in the authors but in the audience. . . . Aug. '92.

'I write this line at the *Daily News* Office—just to

[1] At 39 Norfolk Square, where Mr. McCarthy had one day a slight attack of faintness.

wish you a happy settling down at Woodlands. I am glad for your own sake that you are back among your own quiet woods again. . . . After I left you, I went home and worked for hours at an article for the *North American Review*, and finished it and sent it off. Then I came down here, and wrote a leader. Good night, dear Colleague.'

Cheyne Gardens, Thursday, Aug. 10, '92.

'I have been *fearfully* busy. I am in the House or at a meeting of our Committee *every* day and *all* day. The arrangement with the Grand Old Man passed off on the whole very satisfactorily. He made a really beautiful and touching speech yesterday in answer to the questions of "my honourable friend the member for North Longford," and nothing could have been more energetic and also more pathetic than the sentences in which he declared that Home Rule was now the one great object of his life—the one purpose which holds him to Parliament. So I think we have done well in drawing from him this declaration, and I feel content. I shall tell you all about the incidents of the whole affair when I see you. The division will be taken to-morrow night; and then—assuming of course, as we may assume, the defeat of the Tories—will come the resignation of the Government and the forming of a Liberal administration.'

The telegram, announcing the Liberal victory, duly arrived:

'Government defeated by forty majority. Result better than we expected.'

So the Tories were ousted. The sides ranged themselves. Mr. Gladstone had been sent for to Windsor. How would the great offices be distributed? My literary colleague watches the play, a disinterested spectator, yet not quite from the 'upper boxes.' He writes:

Friday night.

'I met Ashmead Bartlett to-day in one of the lobbies. He asked me if we, the Nationalist members, were going still to sit in opposition. I responded after the fashion of his native land. "Why certainly." "Well," he said—he spoke in great good humour—"I think it is rather hard; first you turn us out of office, and then you sit next us as if you were our best friends."

'"But," I responded, "we have a perfect right. We

put you into office before—and perhaps we may put you in again."

'"If you don't like the Home Rule Bill?" he asked eagerly. "If we don't like the Home Rule Bill," I answered gravely. He went away—looking hopeful—almost happy. But I fancy we shall like the Home Rule Bill. If we don't, it ought to be our own fault—for we shall have a good deal to do with the shaping of it.

'I told you that Labouchere is furious about his not having been offered any place in the Government. The Queen I believe would not listen to his name—at least that is very steadily given out—but I am inclined to believe that the difficulty was with the Grand Old Man, and not with the Queen. Labouchere will do all in his power to harass the Government. He was in close conference to-day with Sir Charles Dilke—who also is very bitter against Gladstone for not having given him any countenance in the election. We shall have a troublous time next session. Of course, the making of every Government means the making of personal grievances. Everybody who has not been offered a place in the Cabinet, or, at all events, in the Administration somewhere, goes about with his grievance and tries to get other men to share in his feeling of grievance. A Radical barrister, who probably thought he ought to be Solicitor-General, came to me to-day and asked me if I did not feel aggrieved because neither I nor any of my party had been offered office. I explained that we could not take office and that Mr. Gladstone was quite aware of the fact. Then he asked me if I did not think the English law offices were very badly arranged.

'"Sir Charles Russell?" I asked in wonder. "Oh, no—but the Solicitor-General—why should Rigby be Solicitor-General?" Then I understood. Is there not an explanation, a lesson, a moral in this? Why should Rigby be Solicitor-General? Why indeed? *I* ought to be Solicitor-General."

'I have a lot of things to tell you—gossippy things about men and women in politics—about political intrigues to get this office for that man and that office for the other man—intrigues in which the petticoat flutters its accustomed part. But they are only worth talking about—not worth writing about. I have never before been so near to the making of an Administration.' Aug. 17, '92.

Aug. '92. ‘The House is up for this year and I shall perhaps now be able to settle to some literary work again—I have done nothing —or next to nothing this long time.’

Aug. 24, '92. I find in my journal of that time, the following notes of a conversation I had with Mr. McCarthy about political affairs, while we walked in the woods at Woodlands on August 23, 1892. It was the day after the defeat of Lord Salisbury's Government.

He talked of the wranglings in his party—as to which a glance at the newspapers of the time would tell more than need be said here. Mr. McCarthy was specially low-spirited about the effect of these dissensions upon their Canadian ally, Mr. Edward Blake, who, he explained, did not understand the Celtic nature, nor how little was really meant by these temperamental ebullitions.

Mr. Blake had told him (Justin McCarthy) that had he realised the constant internecine warfare amongst the prominent Nationalists, he would not have left his home in Canada to come over and serve his native country. Mr. Blake remarked that it was a ghastly fact—could an historian chronicle it—that on the eve of the great division, the culmination of a six years' fight, the chief soldiers on their side had been quarrelling among themselves on mere personal questions.

Mr. McCarthy feared that Mr. Edward Blake might throw up the business in open dissatisfaction, which would be one of the worst things that—at this critical time, when Mr. Gladstone was coming in prepared with a new Home Rule Bill—could possibly befall the Irish Cause. My literary colleague told me how he had remonstrated with the belligerents, one of whom frankly owned that the presence of Mr. Blake had often been a restraining influence. But the hotheaded Irishmen still behaved with their proverbial irrationality in matters of feeling. One man was described

as the 'naughty boy' of the party; another, as the 'naughty girl'; another as the 'emotional woman'; while the strongest man among them was hated for his strength. 'And yet,' said their leader, speaking with genuine affection, 'they are all honest and devoted in their own way. . . . But,' he added, 'it pulls one up. . . .'

He talked very sadly of his own wasted career, but said that he must go on. He said that he 'hoped for the best'; but I am certain he felt how hopeless it all was.

'There is some comfort,' he said, 'in the knowledge that nothing can be done but to stand to one's post whatever comes of it.'

'Then there's another danger, that the public outside knows nothing of, but that you will understand—the smouldering Fenian element under the Parnellites, which is ready to blaze up. They hate us. We had information—true or false—the other day, of a dynamite-man being over here. Whatever happened, *we* should be held responsible, and it would be ruin to the Cause.'

He spoke with deep feeling of Mr. Gladstone and of all that he had sacrificed, and he also spoke of the fatality which seemed to attend every effort towards Irish independence.

Then he said:

'Who can tell what may happen before two years are out? The Home Rule Bill could not be carried before then. The Lords must throw it out twice. Then Gladstone would ask the Queen's permission to create new peers, and they would give in. It would never be allowed to come to that. But Gladstone may die and then the Cause is lost.'

I felt—that Mr. McCarthy was beginning to realise—though he hoped against hope—that he had wasted his strength on a shadow and that Home Rule would not come—unless the Strong Man should come to rule also. He said the Council of Management was hopeless owing to the

members' want of control and their violent language. I asked him what Parnell had done.

'Ah! Parnell gave it up for that reason,' he answered. 'The wires were pulled for him. He did not appear and gave up summoning the Council. When things came to a point, he made a decisive utterance.'

'Couldn't you do that?' I asked.

'No,' he answered, 'for the very basis of my leadership is that there should be no dictatorship.'

* * * * * *

To the letters again. Mr. McCarthy writes:

London, Sept. 2, '92.

'Your letter is very interesting. I do not understand how your thought-reader can accomplish her feats—except by thought-reading alone—and even then it is hard to understand. I wish I had been there, because my unlucky experience is never to have had, either here or in America, any personal knowledge of any manifestation which could have been of serious interest to any human being. And yet there are so many things which I, and I alone, can know, and which if repeated to me must bring conviction, at least, of the fact that there are forces in nature of which we know little or nothing! So much I am not only prepared to admit, but sincerely anxious to be compelled to admit. But I have seen nothing and heard nothing. Ask me no more!'

The following letter, without date, falls, I fancy, into place here:

Cheyne Gardens, Sunday.

'I wish I could have gone to see you to-day, but I could not possibly go out of town. I am expecting Sexton and Knox. Sexton is invaluable as a helper and a worker and guide in Irish politics. All this refers to administration in Ireland—but it means incessant letter-writing and telegraphing—and I could not manage it without the assistance of a man like Sexton who knows the details of Irish administration in a way impossible for me. Our business in Dublin is conducted by Dillon and Davitt and they clamour for us to go over, but we can't go just yet, for some of our business has to be arranged with Asquith the Home Secretary here during

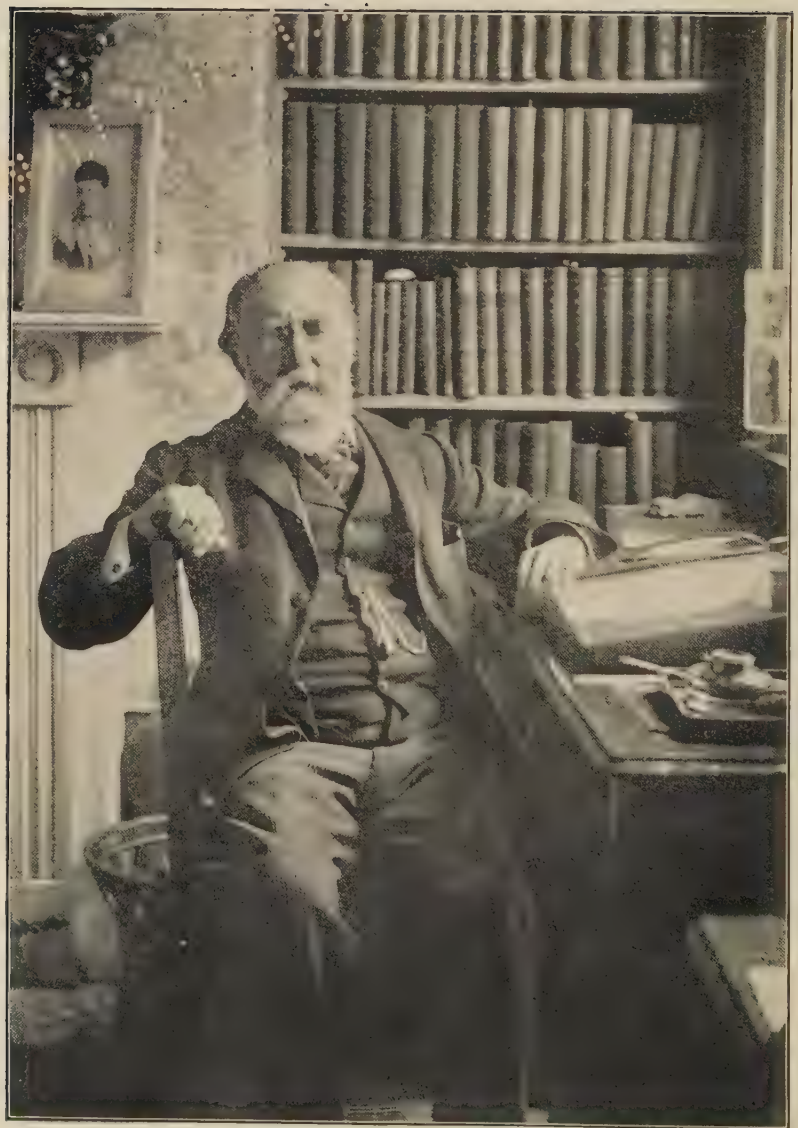

Photo. London Stereoscopic Company

MR. JUSTIN McCARTHY IN HIS STUDY AT EATON TERRACE

the next few days. It would have been much easier work for me if I could have gone over to Dublin and settled down there for a few weeks—but I could not because of the *Daily News* for one reason. I think I shall go over when this week is out.'

'Tell me if you have done anything about—I mean enquired anything about the right to my letters and our joint copyright.[1] I would gladly make a will or do anything that is necessary. . . You were right about my views concerning the Irish question when I spoke to you three weeks ago. Your reminder about Blake brought it all back to me. At that time, we were threatened with a serious split among ourselves, and my bitter conviction began to be that, if that split were to go on, the English people would begin to think that we were unfit for self-government and would grow sick of us and throw us over. I felt sure that even despite all, Gladstone would stand by the Home Rule Cause to the best of his power and the end of his life—but how would it be if he were to die? Would not Harcourt gladly accept the excuse of saying "These people are still fighting among themselves—what can we do for them? Why should we fight for them?" That was the kind of feeling I had, I remember. The controversy has, however, passed over for the present, and I hope it may never be renewed. But, should it be renewed, the same anger would arise. That was what I was thinking of when I talked to you that day three weeks ago.' London, Sept. 9, '92.

'We are settling down gradually in our new house, although much is highly chaotic yet. I am beginning to get my books about me; but I have not been able to give any attention myself to their arrangement—for I have been engrossed in the writing of political letters. I cleared off a lot of arrears yesterday, and began to see blue water again. I have undertaken to write an article in the *Fortnightly Review* on the New Government of Ireland—and when I shall get back to my regular literary work I don't know. Of course I shall not have any holiday. I have given up all idea of such relief.' 73 Eaton Terrace, Oct. 4, '92.

[1] It was about this time that the interdiction in England of a recently published volume of letters, raised the question of my right in the future to publish Mr. McCarthy's letters, should I so desire. At my friend's wish, therefore, I consulted a barrister on the subject, with the result that a legal document was duly executed by Mr. McCarthy securing me the right, and also another document, in reference to the joint copyright in novels we had written together.

CHAPTER XX

A DIFFICULT TEAM

Again I was obliged to join the swallow-flight southward, and Mr. McCarthy's next letter found me in Cannes :

Sunday Night, Oct. 30, '92.

'. . . This will not reach you, dear Colleague, in time to be a greeting for you when you get to Cannes : but it will reach you, I hope, not very long after. I have been in a curious mood of mind to-day—perhaps, however, not altogether curious for me . . . thinking that you will never come back—or that I shall not be here when you do come back—or that the sky will fall or something of the kind.

'. . . I have been thinking of you to-day—as you travel across France—and needless to say hoping that things may be well with you. . . . I have been working at the third volume of my " Georges " all day. It will, I know, interest me again. I get absorbed in it. . . .'

Eaton Terrace, Nov. 2, '92.

'. . . I had terribly hard work in Dublin.—We met in committee every day at eleven o'clock, and we sat until about midnight or later. . . . John Morley came every day at four and we talked matters over. He gave us his views on each point—his views and those of Gladstone. We gave him *our* views—then he telegraphed to London and brought us a new interchange of ideas next day, on which we took further counsel. Nothing could be more satisfactory so far as things have gone, and I think we shall be in perfect understanding. . . .'

London, Nov. 5, '92.

'. . . I am going to Ireland at the end of the coming week to attend quite a series of meetings in Dublin and the country. I do not enjoy the prospect, but the thing has to be done. I have promised to spend the Saturday till Monday

in next week at Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice's place in the country—but will have to depend altogether on the chance of my being able to get back from Ireland in time.

'We are much worried about the Paris funds, and it is not wholly impossible that I may have to go over to Paris. I am working at my "Georges"—mostly reading up—pretty assiduously in the meantime. I do wish I could lead a purely literary life! But it can't be done—for the present anyhow—and the horizon of the future contracts fearsomely every day. I think it is only for literary purposes that I should wish it *not* to contract. Otherwise, I should not much care. Yet life goes on fairly well with me. I am going out to several dinner-parties next week, and shall, no doubt, have all the delicacies of the season, and what can man want more?'

About this time, I had written to him half in jest about some gossip I had heard coupling his name with that of a lady whom I did not know. I find his answer among the letters of this period:

'Dear Friend,—I have not the remotest notion of what you mean. My life is, in that sense, quite lonely. I suppose I have outgrown the time. The other day when reading one of Edmond de Goncourt's melancholy and cynical journals, I was struck by a passage in which he laments his loss of the faculty to be in love any more, and declares that this must be the next stage to decay and death. The declaration seems quite sincere—and, when he wrote it, he was ten years younger than I am now! I have had my day.'

London, Nov. 9, '92.

'. . . We dined last night at Inderwick's—you know Inderwick, Q.C., and met a lot of people—the Charles Russells, Lockwoods, Milmans—and various others. To-night I dine at Jamesons, where very likely I shall meet Campbell. To-morrow night we go to the first night of "Lear" at the Lyceum. . . . This is mere gossip and babble—but I have nothing better to tell you. I am worn out with political correspondence, and my third volume is not moving just at present.'

Eaton Terrace, Nov. 22, '92.

'. . . This is my birthday, and I know you will wish me joy. But I begin to feel as, I see in the papers, the Empress of Austria feels. She has made a public declaration that she

will receive no more congratulations on her birthday. I am rather in the same sort of mood. Perhaps the mood is deepened just now by the prevailing fog. You, at least, are safe from that for the present.

'I quite understand the description you give of your dreamy condition and of the quiet, swift monotony in which the days and hours go by. Yes, I felt all that when I had influenza —the relief from any sense of duty or responsibility—the futility of looking at a watch—because what did it matter what the hour was ?—and the queer sense of satisfaction with the whole condition of things.

'I am very anxious to read the poem of your poor friend. I am quite sure that you did not over-rate it—I always thought there was genius in him struggling to come out, and now perhaps calamity has touched the rock with its wand and set the living waters flowing. . . .

'I found Dublin very trying last time. It was all very well when we were in Opposition : but now, on the very steps of one's hotel, one is waylaid by men and women bearing petitions for places under Government or for redress of grievances, which we are supposed to have full authority to grant—we who are pledged by a fundamental law of our political pact to ask no favours from any Government whether friendly or hostile. I am glad to be back again in my nice little study.

'Campbell and Major Jameson are coming to see me this evening on some business—I do not know what—Campbell only wired to me the fact that they were coming. Major Jameson went over to our Convention and spoke—I am told with great success—but I had to leave the hall before his turn came. . . .'

73 Eaton Terrace, Nov. '92.

'. . . The visit was about parliamentary affairs—Jameson has been offered a seat in England, but it would be a stiff and doubtful contest and he thinks he had better wait on the chance of a secure Irish seat. . . . I wonder if all this kind of thing interests you at all ? You are so far away and have other things to think of. Campbell has asked Charlotte and me to luncheon on Sunday, and we are going. It will be strange to be in your house and you not there. . . .

'. . . I go along, taking life composedly—perhaps stolidly. But happy ? Oh well, who at my time of life is expected to be happy ?

'I think if the Irish fight were over and won and I could settle down to literature for the rest of my life, I should be about as happy as anyone in such a condition has a right to look for. . . . I wish I could make up my mind to take life as it comes, and never to think of the future or the past. . . .

'. . . I have not yet got "Esther Vanhomrigh"—but I mean to get it. Oddly enough, Herbert Paul recommended it to me the other night. I have always been a partisan of Vanessa against Stella.

'I have just finished reading a book by Anatole France called "L'Etui de Nacre"—a collection of short stories and sketches—some of them slight and faint, but some very striking and artistic and original. The two I like best are the opening one—about Pontius Pilate: and one called "Madame de Luzy." You could easily get the book at Cannes, I daresay: it would be worth your while to read it. . . .'

London, Dec. 1, '92.

'. . . I have been feeling curiously and unaccountably depressed and melancholy these last few days. Perhaps it is something purely physical, engendered by the almost incessant rain and mist. I was to have come down to Richmond to-day to dine with my dear old friend Lady Russell—but it is raining in torrents.

'I have had a nice little letter on my birthday from a nice little girl—I am sure she is very nice—I never saw her—now, as she tells, aged fourteen, and who for the last two or three years has always sent me a nice little letter and a birthday card on the twenty-second of November. Her name is Violet Jameson, but I do not know if she is any relation of our friend the Major.

'I have been reading a capital article by your friend the poet,[1] in the *New Review*—a bold and true and stern criticism of Irving's acting and the Lyceum generally. I think I agree with every word of it. If you like, I will send it out to you.'

73 Eaton Terrace, Dec. 5, '92.

'. . . Charlotte and I were at luncheon at your house again yesterday. Major Jameson was there and Florence O'Driscoll and one or two other people. . . .

'To-day I have been to luncheon at D.'s to meet Sir Charles Euan Smith, our Minister to Morocco, who was the hero of the late diplomatic disturbance there. I found him

[1] Mr. George Barlow.

very interesting, and had a long talk with him after luncheon about affairs in Morocco and about several friends whom we appear to have in common. At luncheon I sat next to dear Lady Dorothy, so that I had no trouble, as you will readily conceive, in finding topics for conversation. . . .

'I have worked out of my fit of melancholy and puzzlement for the time. I am weak in health, but nothing serious the matter. I am inundated by political correspondence, and make a feeble struggle now and then to get on with my literary work. Heavens! what would I give to be left to my literary work altogether. Or what would I give to be free to devote myself to my political work altogether! I should be quite willing either way.'

Eaton Terrace, Dec. 8, '92.

'. . . The *Pall Mall Gazette* lately published a long story about me—about my having imprudently gone over to Dublin again, to attend a meeting and being laid up there with serious illness—and about the arrangements the Irish party were making in the event of my not being able to attend in the coming session. Needless to tell you it was all untrue. I did not return to Dublin—I am not laid up in Dublin—I am in London and as well as anybody else. The statement procured for me lots of letters—kind and sympathetic, but, unfortunately, calling for answers.

'We are having a bitter time of it here. The weather is outrageously and absurdly cold—and a keen north-east wind blows which chills one to the very marrow of his bones. I drove home last night—or rather this morning—from the *Daily News* in a storm of snowy rain which positively scared the horse in the hansom and made him shy and put his head down and do all he could in a futile way to dodge the storm. I should take it kindly of Providence if it would, even for one year, allot to me a way of life which would not involve that writing of a late leading article in winter and the driving home at about three o'clock amid storm and sleet and rain. But I do not see my way to any such relief, and perhaps such a consideration drives me along sometimes to certain ideas of a possible compromise with destiny. . . . I am doing more work than usual for the *Daily News* because Paul is away on a political campaign in Scotland—and perhaps the fact that I am doing more work makes me more inclined to grumble—I get more and more to hate the London winter. Had I the

wings of a dove—oh, how I would flee away and be at rest—anywhere under warm skies and soft winds !

'I am doing no work except pot-boiling articles ! I am getting tired of the whole mechanical routine. But what can one do ? . . .'

'. . . The political outlook is a little darkened by the revolt of men like Labouchere and Sir Edward Reed. Gladstone's majority is so narrow that every falling off on his side counts. Meanwhile I have heard nothing discouraging from Dublin—on the contrary, the letters I get from Dillon and others about their conferences with John Morley are distinctly encouraging.' 73 Eaton Terrace, Dec. 10, '92.

'I have been busy all day with a committee meeting held here concerning the Paris funds [1] and the law-suits. We had such of my leading colleagues as happened to be in town and some of the lawyers. The committee lasted for hours and is to meet again to-morrow. And I am trying to finish an article for the *Contemporary Review* which I have promised to let them have on Wednesday morning—and when I made the promise I never thought of this Paris funds difficulty turning up. Well I daresay Providence will kindly pull me through somehow, and by Wednesday morning the struggle will be over—but there is a *Daily News* night in between. Then I have to do a short story for a newspaper syndicate—and meanwhile my "Georges" are lying idle. I was at luncheon yesterday at Lady Dorothy's. Sir Henry Bulwer was there and the Dean of the Chapels Royal and the Bancrofts and various others. I have been reading a book by Violet Paget called "Vanitas"—a collection of three short stories—I wonder if you have read it. It is worth reading—it is curiously clever. . . . Never had I such a day of work as yesterday. I had to finish my article for the *Contemporary*—hardly begun, then I had the second committee meeting which lasted for hours and engendered much letter-writing to catch the last post for Dublin—and then I had to go to the *Daily News* and write a late leader. So when I got to bed at close on four Dec. 12, '92.

[1] Funds of the Nationalist Party which were invested in Paris in the joint names of Mr. Parnell and Mr. Justin McCarthy, as a precautionary measure in case of the League being declared illegal and the money confiscated by the English Government. After the split in the party and the death of Mr. Parnell, difficulties appear to have arisen in the arrangements concerning these funds.

o'clock I was so tired that I could not sleep—with me not an uncommon result of being tired. So I feel dazed to-day—and it is dark and the rain is falling in torrents—and I have been interviewed by a newspaper man—and the world does not seem altogether attractive. . . . Did I tell you that I was at Pembroke Lodge on Saturday? It is really very delightful to be there. I do not know any woman of her age so sweet and charming as Lady Russell—78, and as full of human interest as if she were only thirty.'

73 Eaton Terrace, Dec. 16, '92.

'I have been going along in a jog-trot sort of way—not however in a jog-trot sort of way politically—for we have great troubles and wrangles about a proposed arrangement for the release of our Paris funds—some want to have a peaceful settlement with our Parnellite opponents—*I* do for one—others are fighting out to the bitter end, and we are threatened with another serious quarrel—and all this on the eve of the Home Rule Bill! If we have another split now, the chances of the Home Rule Bill are cruelly damaged—and yet men in their passions will not see this or think about it but only pursue this pitiful wrangle over the Paris funds to the uttermost—as if there was nothing an Irishman had to struggle for but the distribution of the Paris funds! I have been reading a most curious and painful little tale about the witch-time in Salem, Massachusetts. You remember Salem in Massachusetts?—yes, of course you do. You remember that we saw the room where the latest witches were tried. Miss Wilkins has written a powerful and ghastly story in dramatic form—something like "The Amber Witch" only more depressing. I don't recommend it to you for cheerful reading—but as a picture of old Salem life, it would interest you, I think. It is in *Harper's Monthly*. I fancy you could get it at Cannes. But read it in the day and on some particularly bright day—some day such as we cannot have just now in London.'

Dec. 17, '92.

'Where do you think I was to-day? I am sure you would never guess. I was at Hengler's Circus! I was asked to join a party to see the performance. After the circus business we all went round to Lady W.'s to tea. Have I not been frivolous? The circus work was not particularly good—and I am oppressed by these troubles in the Irish party—and I thought the circus would enliven me—and it did not somehow. I came home from the circus with a rather abashed

conviction that I had been gloomy and good-for-nothing in the way of social companionship and not inclined to talk, and that people must have noticed it—which I do not suppose they did in the least or would have minded even if they did. . . . We were enlivened to-day by a fire in our terrace a few doors away from us—and as nothing particular ever happens in our terrace in the ordinary course of things, you can judge what a joy it was to our idle population to see the fire engines dashing up and to see some showers of sparks and some sheets of flame come out from the imperilled house. The disappointment was however that the fire was very easily put out, and the fire-escapes were taken down in a few minutes, and the terrace was given back to its monotonous existence. These are not important items of news I freely admit, but I have no news, alas, except about the Paris funds. I feel weary somehow—disheartened—and I wish that I might sit in the sun somewhere and talk to someone who would talk to me—you, for instance. . . .'

'. . . I am afraid things are not going well with our Home Rule Bill. At present I believe that Gladstone finds it is almost impossible to carry certain members of his cabinet along with him in preparing such a bill as we could accept. As the measure stands at present, we could not accept it—*could not*, and the labour of all these years is gone, and chaos is come again. Of course I do not say that the better counsels may not prevail in the end—but for the moment there is a serious crisis of which the newspapers and the world know nothing. It is a question between us and the recalcitrant Ministers—and Gladstone has got to choose. There was to be a meeting between John Morley and our committee in Dublin to-morrow—Tuesday—but I have had a telegram to say that it is put off until Thursday. At that meeting it will be settled whether Gladstone can give way to us—*we* cannot give way. We have gone the very furthest we could in the way of compromise. If we cannot accept the scheme of the bill, there is an end of it—and of the Liberal Ministry. Only think of it—after all those years ! . . . I will let you know the result of Thursday's meeting as soon as it reaches me. You will know how all this touches me. You know what I have staked on the whole business and sacrificed for it—and if it is to come to nothing !—but as yet I refuse to believe *that*.' Dec. 19, '92.

Dec. 20, '92.

'The enclosed "interview" may amuse you, dearest colleague, for a moment or two—it could not do more than that and it is not worth reading but only glancing at. It relates to what I have already told you—of the sudden falling away of Sir Edward Reed—and his sudden effort to explain that he meant it all for the best and out of pure love for Gladstone and the Irish cause. The news I have had to-day from Dublin is rather more hopeful than it was when I wrote to you yesterday. This day will be the decisive day—when Morley meets our men in Dublin. Dillon and Sexton and Blake will be there, and they are fully acquainted with my views. I am getting shoals of letters and telegrams every day about the whole business, and I really believe the outer public, even in the political world, has not the faintest notion of what is going on. H. P. was here to-day, and I gave him in strictest confidence just a few hints to enable him to guide the *Daily News* aright and not to insist too earnestly that everything is going well. I hope everything will go right in the end. We have strong friends. John Morley is absolutely with us—and, oddly enough, all the Peers in the Cabinet—Spencer, Herschel, Kimberley, Rosebery, and of course Ripon. The men against us are Harcourt, Henry Fowler, Bryce and one or two others. Gladstone is with us in sympathy—and I am quite sure that if he made a resolute declaration his grumbling colleagues would very soon climb down.

'Am I wearying you with dry politics? No, I think not—I think all this will interest you. It really is a very grave crisis. I went to a "private theatrical" affair at the house of Mrs. Sopwith. Do you know her—a friend of Major Jameson's? I believe Campbell was at a former performance last Saturday. My mind was occupied with other affairs which would not be shaken off. I knew very few people there. The only beings I did know were Du Maurier, whose son played in the performance, and Sir Eyre Shaw, our old friend of the Fire Brigade—and your friend General Mackenzie—and our friend Admiral Englefield and Colnaghi and one or two more. We went to Lady Jeune's party on Saturday. It was very pleasant and happily not overcrowded, owing to the time of year.'

73 Eaton Terrace, Dec. 21, '92.

'For your own sake I am glad you are not here now. This has been a day of almost intense fog. For several hours in the

morning—indeed up to one o'clock the darkness was worse than that of an ordinary midnight. It is terribly depressing—gets into one's eyes and one's lungs—takes away all appetite and desire for food and, generally speaking, makes life seem wearisome and the grasshopper a burden. I have given up for the next few weeks going to the *Daily News* at night. I shall write articles at home and send them down, but I shall not write late leaders till January has come and gone. I shall lose some little money by this, but it is better to lose something—than to have the night work and the fearful drives home in the fog and the chill raw morning. I have heard no further political news. I may hear something decisive to-morrow.'

Dec. 22, '92.

'Ever so many thanks for your beautiful flowers coming from the country of the sun to us here, poor dwellers in the fog. They are arranged now on my study table, and they brighten the room and give it perfume and make it quite poetic. I am afraid you are not well, since you have not written, but at all events the flowers are an assurance that you are not too unwell to think of your friends here. I hope this letter will reach you in time to give you a Christmas greeting. You will know full well that all the happiness this time and every other time can bring you, will be wished for you by me. I have just had a telegram from Dublin with the one word "Satisfactory." That is at all events encouraging. I find Christmas here very dreary and shall be glad when it is fairly over. There is a factitious and simulated cheeriness about it in which I do not at all share—and in which I fancy that those who have passed the age for being little children or having little children do not enjoy much more than I do. Your people have gone to Woodlands.'

Dec. 23, '92.

'You ask me if I am well. Yes, I think so, but as you know winter weather and London fogs always oppress and depress me. Everything seems to have ebbed away—and I appear almost suddenly left stranded. . . . Well this is all futile and unreasonable grumbling, unworthy of a man of sober years. Perhaps if we get a good Home Rule Bill I shall feel brighter. I like the condition of mind in which one says "Never mind about *me*, so *that* be accomplished" I do not know of any other mood which is worth much to sustain one as life goes.'

Eaton Terrace, Dec. 26, '92.

'We have just had a distressing and shocking piece of news from Dublin—there has been a dynamite outrage, and a poor detective officer has been literally blown to pieces. The conjecture is that it was done out of revenge by some of the dynamite party because the Government refused to release a man called Daly, who is undergoing a long term of imprisonment for having got up a dynamite plot eight or ten years ago. Why the vengeance should be administered in Dublin, no one can tell, for Daly and his friends were men living in England—were tried in England, condemned and imprisoned in England, and could no more be released by John Morley than by you or me. However, there is the crime, and of course it will be made the excuse for all manner of shriekings against the Nationalist party—as if we could have wished to injure John Morley's police, or to put any difficulty in the way of Gladstone's Government—even supposing we were likely to have any toleration of crime of any kind—for us or against us. Anyhow, besides being a hideous deed, this odious crime makes things more difficult for us. It came at so wrong a time that I cannot help thinking that it was meant to do us harm. All the dynamite men hate us like poison, and hate us the more since we broke away from Parnell and since Michael Davitt joined our party. They detested Parnell while he was our leader, they adored him the moment he turned against us; and no man or woman who ever lived loathed the dynamiters more than Parnell did. Well—that is enough of that ghastly subject, but it was on my mind and I must talk to you about it. I don't want to get despondent, but such things make one despond. And—only fancy my going with a joyous party to see the Boxing Night performance at the Empire to-night!'

73 Eaton Terrace, Dec. 27, '92.

'We have a delightful combination of fog and frost here to-day which fills me with a thrill of satisfaction that you are not here. I had a nice little letter from M—— to-day in which she tells me that they are all disappointed because you were not able to be at home, but at the same time, they feel that in such weather it would be impossible for you to return. It is freezing very hard at Woodlands—and they have had a shooting party. The boys, she says, enjoyed the shooting very much and were very glad to get away from town. I went to the Empire last night—it was a very interesting affair in its way, with some wonderful acrobatic performances and some

marvellous tricks on bicycles and various splendiferous ballets. . . .

I have had a long letter from Edward Blake to-day expressing a wish to be allowed to resign—not his seat, which at first I thought with much alarm he proposed to do—but his place as a member of our committee. He argues that he could serve us better by simply being one of the rank and file. Our internal quarrels distress him. He does not understand them and dreads the responsibility of being a leader where he finds it hard to grasp the whole situation. I will ask him not to make up his mind finally until he and I have talked it over when he comes to London. Apart from the splendid services he can render us in the details of the Home Rule Bill, I think his presence as an entirely partial newcomer might in our committee have a moderating and a salutary influence. As to serving in the rank and file—he *could not* be one of the rank and file. As I think I told you before, he has, after Gladstone himself, no superior in the House of Commons. Such a man cannot reduce himself to the rank and file. The papers are still full of the dynamite outrage, but somehow I do not think it will do us much harm. All the Irish Nationalist papers on both sides, have raised a cry of horror and indignation against it, and already several Nationalist meetings have been held to denounce it. Of course the *Times* and the *Standard* use it against us—or indeed rather against Gladstone as much as they can—but the English people are after all a people of common sense, and they will not allow it to affect a great national cause. Good-bye, dearest colleague—I gladden in the thought of your getting better—and do not allow yourself to trouble about me. I shall come out all right—and if we carry the Home Rule Bill, I shall not, as far as I am personally concerned, have anything more to ask of the powers above. . . .'

'I have been working pretty hard at small things—and have been holding little conferences as to the course we ought to pursue with regard to the dynamite outrage in Dublin. We intend to be represented at every public meeting called in Ireland to denounce the crime, and to get up meetings of Irishmen in England and Scotland for the same purpose. But we did not issue any special manifesto of our own, as some wise men wished me to do on Sunday. I altogether declined, not seeing why on earth the chairman of the Irish

Dec. 29, '92.

party should assume that any responsibility rested on him to disclaim any participation in revolting crime, or any manner of sympathy with it. But of course we shall join with the country in repudiating the creatures who commit such crimes. In fact there is really no difference of opinion among any section of Irishmen on the subject.

'I dined at Mrs. Forbes' last night. It was pleasant, but there was a great fog and it was hard to get home.'

Dec. 31, '92. 'The Old Year is going out with us in familiar frost and fog. I cannot say that I lament over its parting. I do not see any reason to expect that the New Year will do any better for most of us, but a new year is like a new morning, a new possibility if not exactly a new hope.

'I go on as usual. I write masses of political letters—I have written an article for the *Contemporary's* January number. I am to write an article for the *Fortnightly* of February. I have been invited by Tillotsons to write another novel for them—the same length as "Red Diamonds" . . . they offer to allow me my own time for sending in the manuscript—and I should certainly not begin before I have finished my third volume of the "Georges."

'We shall have the House of Commons sitting in less than a month from this day, and it will be one of the most important sessions of modern times. So far as I can see, all things are looking hopeful—I mean as regards our relations with Gladstone and the Government.'

CHAPTER XXI

IN SIGHT OF THE GOAL

The letters continue to reach me all through that winter which I spent at Cannes :

73 Eaton Terrace, Jan. 1, '93.

'We have begun the New Year with snow, dearest Colleague, the first real snowfall of this winter. It is not much of a fall so far, but the weather is bitterly cold. I have been writing a New's Day sort of leader to the *Daily News*—a weary mechanical sort of business. Bobby Hochstetter—you remember him ?—has been here to-day and brought with him a friend of his whom he met in Egypt—a very interesting man—I wonder if you have heard of him—Savage Landor—a grandson of the poet and who though very young has already distinguished himself as a traveller, and is to be a little lion of the Geographical Society soon. He has been living in some wonderful islands off the north coast of Japan where the people are all covered with hair, and naturally wear no other covering, except in winter. He has actually been *living* among them—picked up their language, which consists however of only a few hundred words. They have no laws and no civilization, and live in huts. He brought a great number of sketches with him. I had heard of him before through the Thomsons, and was to have gone with them to see his studio and his sketches, but it turned out to be a day of fearful fog, and getting about was utterly impossible. He is going to bring out a book.

'We are getting tired here of this double dose of winter. There is a cruel monotony about it. I wonder if you are able to be up and go out of doors. It is a comfort to think that

without going out of your own room, you can see the blue Mediterranean.'

73 Eaton Terrace, Jan. 2, '93.

'I wonder if you will get tired of receiving so many letters from me? I do not think I have written to you so persistently during any of your former absences. I know that you are not well, and I know that you cannot write much, and I think that the frequent appearance of a letter from London would perhaps help you to beguile the time. Yet I have very little to tell you. There is a lull in politics now for the present. I hear from Dillon and Sexton in Dublin that everything is going on fairly well. I am writing an article on politics. I have written a short story for the National Press Agency—whatever that is—for I really do not know. I lead a very quiet life, see but few people, dine out now and again. Of course this quietude will change completely when the Session and the season begin.'

Jan. 3, '93.

'Since I wrote to you, I have heard confirmation of the news of the premature death of a friend whom I thought highly of—young William Summers, who was a member of the House of Commons. He was a young English Radical, who had been brought by the instincts of manhood into sympathy with the Irish cause from the very first. He had been one of the Whips of the Liberal party when in opposition, and many people thought—and I among the number—that Gladstone ought to have found a place for him in the Administration. He sat in this room but a few weeks ago—one Sunday when he came to see me on the eve of his making a voyage to India. He was full of delight in the prospect of the voyage and the new experience, and assured me that he would be faithfully back to vote with us at the opening of the Session. He had not got far into India when he was seized with small-pox and died. Life seemed bright before him—and now behold! You probably would not remember him, but I know I introduced him to you one day—do you remember it?—when we went to Holliday's garden-party at Hampstead to meet the Gladstones? . . . I am glad to know that there is really a substantial improvement in your condition. I envy you the sun and the sky and the scent of the flowers filling your room.'

Jan. 5, '93.

'We are still in darkness and frost. We have personally some rather comical discomforts to endure. Our water-pipes are all frozen up. We have to send out and buy water as if it were beer. Our boilers are also frozen, and we can't light a fire,

I am told, in the kitchen under penalty of bursting boiler and general smash-up. The only cooking that can be done must be done on a fire in the servants' sitting-room, which does not rise beyond chops and steaks. So we have to get in chickens and tongues and such-like cold food from a neighbouring cookshop or lukewarm from the pastrycooks. We have to keep some jets of gas burning all night and all day to keep the gas-stream itself from being frozen. Altogether we are having a high old time. And I am told it is likely to last at least a fortnight longer.'

'. . . I am most deeply grieved in your grief. There is nothing more to be said, even by so intimate and sympathetic a friend as I am. I remember so many a time when I had met him [1] at your house, and so many associations came back, and I thought of you and your sorrow at having lost him, and I learned how much one can feel at the grief of a beloved friend. . . .' Jan. 6, '93.

'. . . I went to-day to see Savage Landor's sketches of the Japanese islands where the hairy folk live. Some of them are very interesting, but his best sketches are with his publisher, who is preparing to bring out his book. He is preparing to lecture before the Geographical Society on the thirtieth of this month—the day before the ominous meeting of Parliament. He is a very young man—six or seven and twenty at the most. He lived for five months in the hut of one islander who was a madman, but harmless—and he lived on raw salmon and nothing else. He told us that he was lately asked in London how he travelled about the bigger island, and he explained that he travelled on horseback. Had he ridden much there? Oh yes, more than three thousand miles. And then came the question in all sober gravity, "But why did you never take the train?" (! ! !) Jan. 7, '93.

'The air is thick with conflicting rumours about the Home Rule Bill—most of them absurdly inaccurate. I think if things were at all settled here, in the political sense, I should try another lecturing tour in America and Canada. If I could get an honourable opportunity of giving up politics I should certainly try such an experiment and then settle down to literature. Fancy all the schemes one idly makes years and years ahead—as if one were going to live for ever . . .

[1] Here, Mr. McCarthy refers to the death of my father.

and only the other day my poor young friend Summers died of a chance contagion in India—who was young and strong and rich, and with all that he wanted in life apparently quite attainable.

'. . . I went out to Shepherd's Bush to give a lecture, and then to supper at the house of the rich person in the neighbourhood. How often, oh how often, I have been to that sort of entertainment. Last night it was a very good entertainment, but still it was the same sort of thing. And the lady of the house set me into contemplation. She had the remains of beauty. She had two daughters—both pretty—one almost exquisitely pretty—almost beautiful. I could not help thinking that once the mother was like them. . . . It set me thinking how many little glimpses I have thus had into family life of various kinds while on a course of lectures. Do you remember Professor Morse of Salem and his household and his banquet? Yes, I am sure you do.'

73 Eaton Terrace, Jan. 13, '93.

'I saw Gladstone and John Morley to-day. Gladstone seems in superb health and splendid spirits. What he wanted me for was only to try and induce our Irish Nationalist party to cross the floor of the House and sit with him and his colleagues. He thinks this would be of immense importance during the discussion of the Home Rule Bill—that he and Morley should be able to consult one of our men at any and every moment. I am afraid it can't be done. There is so strong a feeling in Ireland against any positive pledging of Irish Nationalist members to any English party—and you know that it is futile to hope too much from arguing on practical lines against any strong sentiment in the human heart—but I have told him that I will put it before my people as earnestly as I can and tell them how much he desires it. As regards the bill itself, the further communications are put into the hands of Morley, speaking for Gladstone, and any two of my colleagues nominated by me, with myself of course. I at once named Dillon and Sexton. I fancy we shall have a pretty busy time of it during the next fortnight.

'I have not read the novel of Zola's that you speak of—but I will get it. Have you read "Jane Field" by Miss Wilkins—a book in one volume? It is wonderful in its way.'

Jan. 20, '93.

'I have only time to write you a few lines. I have been kept very busy over the Home Rule Bill. Blake, Sexton, and

I spent several hours to-day with Morley going over the clauses, and we are to meet him again at nine to-night, and shall probably sit up till somewhat of a late hour. There are of course some difficulties of detail, but I see nothing of serious difficulty ahead. To-day we were engaged mainly with the financial clauses—to-night we shall go into the general questions. I expect some days of pretty hard work over the measure.

'I do not think we can possibly do what Gladstone wants us to do about the change of seats. It would be misunderstood in Ireland, and would be made a handle against us by our enemies. But, as you have said, it *is* a wonderful thing that such a request should have been made by him and so strongly urged upon us.'

'We have been discussing the Home Rule Bill here from day to day. As far as we have gone, I do not see any irremediible difficulty in the way. We sat up until a very late hour—two in the morning I think—at John Morley's house on Saturday night, going over the clauses, and I have great hopes that we shall work them into satisfactory shape. We shall have some more sittings before all is quite settled, and I hope and trust that they will prove satisfactory. Do you remember all our anxiety at the coming of the last Home Rule Bill, after the failure of which we went to America? Well—if this new Home Rule Bill should fail!—I wonder where I shall go or what I shall do. I shall certainly make some decision—if we do not win this time—and try another form of life. I shall have to do it—the resources will not hold out. I dined to-day at M——'s to meet Mr. and Mrs. Edward Blake—I had met Mrs. Blake before, as you know—stayed at their house at Toronto. Lady Edmond Fitzmaurice was there, and a very picturesque Lady Steele and various persons. I had been sleepless and unwell and I did not greatly enjoy anything. The truth is I am tired of London and the London winter—and the grey horizon contracts around me and I feel it somehow. . . . Things are going on in the old commonplace way here. I have nothing new to tell. It would not be a piece of news to tell that it is generally raining and that a speck of colour has not been seen for months anywhere along the horizon. Nor would it be much of a novelty to inform you that I pass the greater part of each day in answering political letters,

Jan. 22, '93.

and that Justin McCarthy, who was above all things a literary man, seems to be a different sort of man from the present possessor of the name, and to be altogether a creature belonging to the far-off and dim past.'

73 Eaton Terrace, Jan. 23. 'I had a curious little experience the other night. While I was dressing to go out to dinner one of the maids brought me a letter from Mrs. Gladstone which had been delivered by hand. While I was opening the letter, a little rouleau of five-pound notes dropped out. I was wondering whether dear old Mrs. Gladstone had thought the time had come for helping the leader of the Irish party out of some of his personal difficulties ! ! ! Alas ! no—the letter explained that a young woman—a friend of Mr. Gladstone's, was anxious through her and through me to contribute fifty pounds towards the relief of the poorest evicted tenants in Ireland. . . .'

Jan. 24. 'I have just had a visit from the artist of the new Liberal paper — Newnes' enterprise — to supply the place of the deserted *Pall Mall Gazette*—he wants to make a few sketches of me and my study—and he told me what I heard for the first time—that my story "The Dictator"—is to appear in the new paper.

Jan. 26, '93. 'To-night, we are going to the first night of Henry Arthur Jones' new play—which is all about the House of Commons. Only think of how *we* schemed out such an idea ! I believe a great part of the play goes on in the private room of the Prime Minister—a room with which I am not unfamiliar, and which will hold about six persons closely packed !

'I am to see Campbell to-day at five o'clock. He has just telegraphed to me. He has been managing very kindly the sale of Linotype shares for me. He has been ever so good about it. He advised me to sell quite a long time ago. I fancied he had forgotten about it long since, as I knew he had some worries of his own. But no, indeed he had not. What prosaic details ! I only inflict them on you because I want to tell you how very kind Campbell was.'

Jan. 27, '93. 'We went to Henry Arthur Jones' play last night. Campbell came with us—at least he met us there—and do you know —would you believe it, he was actually in good time ! The first night was splendidly attended. We went behind afterwards and drank champagne and congratulated Jones and Wyndham and everybody. All the regular people were there

and a few others. Among the others was Lord Randolph Churchill whom I had not seen for some time, and who gave me certainly a most friendly welcome. The play ?—well it was undoubtedly a great success, but I did not like it. The motives were wretchedly inadequate to the complications. To think of a great Prime Minister having to resign office because an enemy finds that he goes to drink tea late at night with a pretty girl of a humble class—always, except on one unlucky night, in the presence of her father ! Of course he marries her, and she is as good as gold and all the rest, and all comes out quite happy in the end—but the whole complication is too preposterous for me. All about the House of Commons was grotesque, impossible and ridiculous—but of course that would not matter with the general public. The dialogue was on the whole very bright and good, and most of the acting was admirable. I am glad it was a success.'

'I feel a little conscience-stricken because I have not written to you for two whole days—and yet I really could not help it. I have been fearfully busied with writing letters and seeing people about politics. To-day it took me exactly four hours to dress. Come—you will say, perhaps—there is no great evidence of intense occupation here. This is the life of a sybarite and not of a hard-worked man. Wait and hear. The moment I got up one of our party came to see me—then came another member of the party—recollect that Parliament opens to-morrow—and so it kept on till two o'clock when I emerged for the first time fully dressed and fit to be seen. And all these men had legitimate business, and all these men I was willing and glad to see, only I wish I could have bathed and dressed before the first of them arrived. To-night, I am having a meeting of our committee here in my study. We shall probably sit until long after midnight. I think things are going fairly well—but there are still some difficulties. To-morrow we elect our officers. We shall have a long meeting—perhaps several meetings of the party. Charlotte and I had luncheon yesterday at your house, and Campbell told me you are coming home at the end of the week. Is that so ? I should have thought you had better stay away somewhat longer. I have given you my advice, that you ought not to come back just yet. It is very serious and sincere advice. Therein I have liberated my soul. I have done my duty. But if you should

Jan. 30, '93.

come, nobody in London will welcome you more cordially than I.'

73 Eaton Terrace, Feb. 4, '93.

'I have gone through a weary and worrying week. We have meetings of the party and meetings of the committee and conferences with John Morley—we had one last night at half-past twelve o'clock, for instance. On Monday we have meetings and conferences as well. We have not yet arrived at a final agreement as to the details of the Home Rule Bill. There are some very serious points in dispute—and it is expected that the bill will be brought in Monday week. My mind goes back to that other Home Rule Bill—over the fortunes of which I watched with so much anxiety, and after the fate of which came the visit to America. What an age seems to have passed away since those days.'

Feb. 8.

'I have been at the House all day—we had, as well as the business of the House, a meeting of our party which occupied from four o'clock to very nearly eight o'clock. I was to have gone to a conversazione at the National Liberal Club as a reception to Gladstone, and then to a party at Lady Spencer's. . . . But I have not gone to either. I am at present frozen into a mere politician. I am swallowed up in politics. If we should fail this time, then I think I shall give up political life altogether. And what then? What will remain? I should like a quiet life of literature—but shall I be graced so far?'

Feb. 12, '93.

'Charlotte has heard that you are expected to be at home on Thursday evening. This would be in accordance with your intention to leave Cannes on the fifteenth. . . . We have incessant meetings—conferences among ourselves—midnight conferences with Morley and day conferences with him too. We were with him in his room at the House yesterday for three hours, and then we had a meeting of the committee here, in this room, which began at eleven at night and ended at two in the morning. I interjected a dinner-party at Mrs. Raikes—between the day conference and the night conference. To-day I am doing much the same thing. I have had to give up writing for the *Daily News* this last week. I *could not* find the time. I think the Bill will be satisfactory on the whole, but there are still some points in dispute—and it is to be brought in to-morrow. What a day we shall have! The anxiety and the physical weariness are terribly exhausting. I feel even

a dinner-party a delightful relief. Herbert Paul made his maiden speech on Friday—and you will be glad to hear that it was both, in matter and manner, a brilliant and universally acknowledged success.'

'To-morrow I shall certainly be here, if you are able to come—about three, I need not say how delighted I shall be to see you. I am not allowed by my doctor to go anywhere until he has seen me on Wednesday. It is nothing serious, he says—only might become so. I have had to put off various engagements and, of course, to keep away from the House. I am particularly anxious to save myself up for the second reading of the Home Rule Bill, which will begin on Monday next week. In the meantime I was to have dined at Causton's on Wednesday, but I have given it up—and at Lady Aberdeen's on Friday—but I have given that up too. I want, if I can be allowed, to go to the farewell dinner to Waddington, the departing French Ambassador, at the Mansion House on Saturday. But I daresay I shall not be allowed to go. It will be a sort of historic occasion, and I shall be sorry to have to miss it. . . . I have done some work to-day. For all my lassitude, I have written the first of six articles for Rideing entitled "Personal Memories of Famous Americans." Yesterday I read and returned the whole last volume of proofs of "Red Diamonds." So you see I have not been leading quite a laggard life.' 73 Eaton Terrace, Feb. 27, '93.

'We are having a trying time of it here—fighting against Tory obstruction. Only think how times have changed. They are determined to wreck the Home Rule Bill if they can by the force of their obstruction, and we had one or two very bad divisions—the government majority shrinking down to 21 or 23. Many of our Irishmen were absent, not expecting this serious work. Gladstone sent for me to his room and appeared greatly concerned and depressed. John Morley was in despondency—Harcourt in despair. I will tell you all about this when we meet to-morrow perhaps, if you can have me to luncheon.' House of Commons, Mar. 11, '93.

'Yes—we have met with a disappointment. Yesterday, just before I went to the House, I received rather a long letter from Gladstone—all in his own handwriting, and each letter clear and strong—telling me that, in consequence of obstruction and falling off in majorities, he and his colleagues had Mar. 14, '93.

decided to put off the second reading of the Home Rule Bill until after Easter. This, to my mind, seemed disaster—partly because it seemed to put a premium on obstruction. I hurried down to the House and hastily conferred with Sexton, Dillon, Blake and others, who all took the same view of it. I wrote to Gladstone asking him at least to have no public announcement made until we had time to think over the whole thing and what our course should be. But Gladstone did not come to the House ; he was unwell and went home to bed—and the House was in charge of Harcourt—and Harcourt told me that he had no authority to delay the announcement. So I had to say a few words deprecating the resolution come to, and urging that it should not be considered final. Harcourt said it was final. Sexton asked an appropriate question or two—and that was all. I do not think I *shewed* any excitement, but I felt the whole thing deeply. However, we had already made up our minds that our best policy was to make the best of the situation, hold on to our alliance, and endeavour to get them to force on the bill immediately after Easter. We find sympathisers everywhere among the English and Scotch Radicals. I am satisfied now that we acted wisely in not making too much of it in the House, and that our moderation will strengthen our claim after Easter. I would have written to you about this only it was too late when I got home and I had not a second to myself while I was in the House.'

73 Eaton Terrace, Mar. 31, '93.

'Oh, my dear colleague, I am so tired of everything. I am tired of the House of Commons, and I am tired of London and tired of the quarrel about the *Freeman's Journal* which has to be set right within the next few days. Our committee meet *here* every day and for some days to come, and so I am chained to London. The House opens again Thursday, and the great debate on the second reading of the Home Rule Bill begins. I suppose I shall have to speak in the debate, and if I have, I shall try to do my best. I remember your coming to the House to dine with me years ago at the time of the second reading of Gladstone's first Home Rule Bill—and just before you came I had to fire off my speech on the second reading. Something happened—I forget what—which compelled me to come on earlier than I had expected.'

April 1, '93.

'I wish I could have been at Woodlands to-day. I should have enjoyed it much.

'But it was absolutely impossible. Some of us have had to go to Ireland and some of us have consented to remain in town. We have met—those few of us who remain in town—every day literally—and we receive letters and telegrams by every post—and, as you will easily imagine, send out a goodly swarm of letters and telegrams too. To-day—Sunday—the telegraph messenger has been incessantly ringing at my door. I think I told you that as it never rains but it pours, so it has happened that a man of the *Daily News* staff has broken down and that I have promised to do all I can in helping to fill his place for the present. The result is that, with all my parliamentary and political work, I wrote an article every day last week—and if you only knew what a struggle it was some days to get the article done! Of course this sort of thing could not go on for very long. No strength and no nerves could stand it for more than a limited time. Perhaps if I cannot go to Woodlands on Wednesday, I might go at the end of the coming week—Saturday till Monday. I long for a quiet walk among the woods. I am growing fossilized with this political work. I am beginning to have no more feeling left than a machine has—a garden roller or something of that kind—only that the work of garden-roller is much more picturesque and delightful than mine.

'I hope you are enjoying the woods and the birds and the lovely premature summer air. It is indeed, I fear, all too premature, and will exhaust itself immaturely like a life that begins its passion too soon.'

'I have a kind of idea that you have a large party staying with you to-day for what the newspaper correspondents would call "pigeon-shooting purposes." If that be so I am sorry I am not there too—for as I certainly should not shoot pigeons I might have more chance of talking to you. I hope you are still enjoying your sunlight and the warm air and the music of the birds and the scarcely less delightful music of the branches and the boughs. I attend the House of Commons and I write incessant articles for the *Daily News*. I hope however to be somewhat relieved of this *Daily News* work next week. I find that Tillotsons has asked me not for *one* short story but for two short stories. I am reduced to the conditions of a working carpenter—living by piece-work—from hand to mouth—from day to day . . . After all, what

73 Eaton Terrace, April 8, '93.

does it matter ? I might have thought of something better at one time—but really I do not know. Whom would the better thing please ? Myself ? Yes—but I can't live for myself alone !

'I fancy I shall have to speak in the House on Monday. Such at all events is the present arrangement. I shall do my best and shall really be glad to make a successful speech. But I can't prepare—that is my misfortune. I have not the gift of preparation any more than I have the gift of song. And so success or failure is with me a mere toss up of momentary inspiration or not. I shall tell you what happens—and just as composedly and impartially as if I were talking of someone in the success of whose speech neither you nor I had one grain of personal interest. You won't think any the worse of me if I should happen to make an unsuccessful speech !

'All this is dreadfully egotistic. But the excuse is that it is only egotistic to *you*.

April 11, '93. '. . . I made my speech. It took the House very well—at all events it had the supreme merit of not being too long. But I had a bad cold, and I believe I was not well heard in the galleries. But I think the speech answered my purpose—and, anyhow, it's made and done with.'

CHAPTER XXII

THE SECOND HOME RULE BILL

Mr. Gladstone had brought in his second Home Rule Bill on February 13, 1893. It had sailed through obstruction, and a majority on the second reading might be safely anticipated. That a Bill for Home Rule in Ireland should actually pass the House of Commons seemed almost a miraculous achievement, when one looked back upon the days of Kilmainham and the Phœnix Park murders. But the thrill of joyous excitement was wanting now. Parnell was dead. He had died fighting against the old followers whom he had led almost to victory. Now that victory was in sight once more, the shadow of the lost leader darkened the vision. For Mr. McCarthy's heart had gone out of the struggle with the fall of the old chief to whom he had been bound by ties of personal affection severed with bitter grief. Yet it would have been strange—had he not written with something of triumph.

House of Commons. April 20, '93.

'We are on the verge of the division on the second reading. It is nearly midnight.'

April 23, '93.

'We are all in good spirits—political good spirits I mean—about the majority on the second reading of the Home Rule Bill. We are rejoiced for this reason—the Government came into office by a bare majority of forty, and now, instead of their majority falling off because of the Home Rule Bill, it has actually increased by three votes; so we are all very

glad. I wish you could have been in the House and have seen the demonstration made when after the Division, Gladstone came in. All our party and all the Liberals stood up and applauded him. He made a very fine speech—even for him, and his voice was splendid. . . . The weather is delightful—and oh! how charming Woodlands must be! Charlotte and I walked in the Park this morning—and the air was delightful, and there was a kind of golden haze that reminded one of certain seasons in Italy—especially in Rome. I have been ordered by my doctor to take two half-hours' walk—every day—rain or shine. I am all right enough, but the incessant House of Commons is wearying—and of course it will be all the same thing, only worse, during the remainder of the Session. For even when the Home Rule Bill is not on, we shall have to attend as faithfully as ever to sustain the Government against any chance of being thrown out on some other question.

'I have been doing no literary work of late, but a good deal of leading-article work. Life goes on in a curious, mechanical sort of way. Only when I get home from the House of Commons late at night, do I sometimes sit down and think over things that are not political—sit down and merely think over things—how they have gone, how they might have gone—and other such futile considerations. Then I take up a book and read a little. Talking of books, have you read "Wreckage"—by Hubert Crackanthorpe—published by Heinemann? It is a volume of seven short stories—very dismal, sometimes ghastly, very mimetic of De Maupassant and Hardy and Gissing and Saltus, but still very clever and quite worth reading.'

73 Eaton Terrace, April 27, '93.

'I am hopeful about the Home Rule Bill—but even as to that I can only see the same prospects—that it will certainly pass the Commons—that it will certainly be rejected by the House of Lords—that we shall have an autumn Session—and that the Bill will be sent up again, that the Lords will not resist any further.'

April 28, '93.

'I am to be interviewed this afternoon at half-past three by the correspondent of a Russian journal—whose name I can't make out, any more than I can the name of his paper. He is sent to me with a letter of introduction by Madame Novikoff, who is just leaving for Russia and will return in the autumn. I only saw her once this session. I don't believe

that she is really in sympathy with Home Rule at all—although she says she is, and she assures me in her letter that her Russian friend is a devotee of Home Rule.

'The cheque comes in welcome. Curious that "The Ladies' Gallery" should have suffered from its connection with politics when there is really nothing or very little of politics in the book. I suppose a good deal does depend on the title. In "The Rival Princess" there is ten times more of politics than in "The Ladies' Gallery." Did I tell you that Wilson [1] has been promoted downstairs to be one of the door-keepers of the House itself? Yes, he has—and the Ladies' Gallery does not seem to be quite itself without him.

'You must come and dine at the House when you are in town. You would like to see the old place all over again.'

'I am sorry I cannot go to see you to-morrow—but my trouble is this: All the negotiations carried on between us and the Government are conducted by Dillon, Sexton, and myself. Dillon and Sexton have both been summoned over to Dublin about the *Freeman's Journal* question—and I am left alone in charge of affairs here. Very likely I may never be sent for by anyone, or have anyone come to see me to-morrow, but I cannot venture to leave town. I am thinking of accepting an invitation to luncheon to-morrow—but if we do venture, I must leave the address with the servants, and the injunction that they are to send a cab for me if I should be wanted by any important personage. Once at least I remember I was summoned away from your house in the same fashion. April 29, '93.

'Do you know anything of the novels of Miss Bayly—Edna Lyall? I never read any of them, but I believe they have an enormous circulation. Edna came down to the House of Commons last night with a letter of introduction to our old friend Channing—who, by the way, is very unwell and residing at Torquay. Edna is a devoted Home Ruler and is going to Ireland to write a book about it, and wants to be put in the right track by me. I shall give her an open letter recommending her to all in Ireland who know me and care about me—and then a list of names of persons to whom she ought to send my letter. I think she will find friends enough of mine to put her

[1] Mr. Wilson, door-keeper of the Ladies' Gallery, who figures in our joint novel *The Rebel Rose*.

on the right way. She is not pretty . . . very modest and shy, and I think much in earnest. She told me the success of her novels was quite a surprise to herself. I believe she makes quite a fortune by them—and I never had one of them in my hand! But I did not tell her that!

'I have not been to any of the private views at the picture galleries. I have not been *anywhere* except to the House and an occasional dinner party and evening party. This coming week I have a whole string of dinner parties on. I shall keep Saturday for Woodlands—if that day will suit you.'

73 Eaton Terrace, Sunday. No date.

'I send this on chance to Norfolk Square. I do not know whether you are in town or out—I wrote to you at Woodlands and got no reply, which has made me fancy that you have come back to London and that my letter is still lying on the hall table at Woodlands all unnoticed of Mrs. Englefield. Anyhow, there was nothing particular in it except a few expressions of my own personal political troubles and difficulties. I am going out of town with Charlotte for a few days. We are going to Westgate, for we both feel the intense need of being re-invigorated by the sound and breath of the sea. We mean to leave on Tuesday—and I must be in town for the reopening of Parliament on the following Monday. We shall be at the St. Mildred's Hotel—and if you should be in the mind to write to me there, a letter from you will naturally be always a welcome gift. I have been attending the House of Commons very constantly; and I want change of subject and scene. We dined at the House on Tuesday last—a dinner given by Healy to meet our old friend General Collins who is now the United States Consul-General for London. You remember our friend who came with us and Boyle O'Reilly in what Swinburne would call "the dead days forgotten" to see Cambridge and Harvard and Longfellow's House. He admonished me again to give you his kind regards. . . . He is a great friend of President Cleveland, and I believe much in Cleveland's confidence. He is not very literary—but there are good qualities—not to say virtues, to be found outside literature. The meeting with him brought my mind back to very dear old times, and while I was talking to him about political friends and joining with him most sincerely in lamenting the death of Boyle O'Reilly, I was thinking of that long walk that runs the whole length of Boston Common, and

of those who walked there and will never walk there again. Well, as the fine writers say—a truce to sentiment. Tell me where you are and what you are doing. I am far from well, but I think a few days' rest and the sound and sight of the sea will set me up again.

'Yesterday I met, on the Terrace, Mrs. Craigie—John Oliver Hobbes—you know her books—they are decidedly clever. She is quite a young woman, very bright and quick in talk, and rather pretty. . . . The T. P. O'Connors had her in charge and asked me to join them at tea on the Terrace which I was very glad to do. . . . I have several engagements for to-night but I don't suppose I shall fulfil any of them. I do not see how I could manage mounting upstairs and standing about and all that sort of thing—especially as I have been walking the Lobbies all this day since twelve o'clock. I am getting a little better every day, I think. The pain is only at intervals and is at no time really acute—only a dull low growling pain—if one may make use of such a mode of description. I should probably be all right now only for the incessant divisions. To-morrow, Thursday, and Friday I shall have to be in the House literally all day long—for we have early meetings of committees and also of the party. The effect is somewhat monotonous. Why can't you come to the Terrace some evening and bring M—— and have tea? It would be very nice.'

House of Commons, June 5, '93.

'I am so glad you have settled satisfactorily about your book. The largest private dining-room at the House of Commons will hold ten guests—but of course you could have a much larger party in one of the public (ladies') dining-rooms, and I should advise you to make your dinner there. It could be made much more picturesque—more of the life of the House about it. Can I help you with the descriptions? I should be delighted to lend a hand.'

June 10, '93.

'You shall have the answers to your questions and some suggestions of my own concerning the dining-rooms and the Terrace on Monday morning. Just now I am rather amazed to find that I did not notice that line in your letter which asked me to dinner on Friday. I had read through part of the letter when I was called away, and I must have resumed the reading at a wrong place. I am sure you never would think it was rudeness on my part. I could not have gone anyhow.

'Yesterday was a terrible day. We had two meetings of our party—the first began at one in the afternoon—the second ended at midnight—with no end of divisions intervening. Dear friend, my mind is tempest tossed. I have hardly ever gone through such a day as yesterday. We have fallen into hopeless disunion in our party. While we were trying to fight the enemy we have a mutiny in our own ship. Sexton has hopelessly given in his resignation and resolves to withdraw from public life. We are to have another meeting on Monday to try to prevail on him to withdraw his resignation—and I shall get Gladstone to bring his most earnest influence to bear upon him. The conditions were certainly trying to a sensitive man. It is all a conflict of jealousies and hates, and the national cause is forgotten. And we are fighting this difficult battle with our narrow majority and with Gladstone's declining years—and we are frankly telling our opponents that we are not able, even at such a crisis, to govern ourselves and our rancours and our tempers! I am well-nigh sick of it all. I have ruined health and fortune and literary work for this! I am sorry from my heart for Blake—the gallant and gifted friend who gave up his home and his well-earned ease to come over and fight this hopeless battle—which is to be lost by our own fault! He says he feels heart-broken—and his conviction is that the present Bill is lost. I am not quite so unhopeful—but I feel terribly depressed. I do not know what Monday's meeting may bring. Do not say anything of all this, just yet—it will soon enough be proclaimed on the house-tops.'

June 11, '93. 'Oh! my dear colleague, what a day I have had! Political friends coming to consult me—interviewers come to get at my opinions—all quite like the old time, and a decisive meeting of our party to-morrow—at which I am encouragingly assured by Blake and Dillon, all will depend upon my opening speech. Meantime I want to answer some of your questions about the dining-rooms of the House of Commons and the Terrace. I think you might take the Terrace as on one of those recent evenings when it is as *you* never saw it or for that matter—*I* never saw it, literally flooded with women. You see that members have nearly all to stay the whole time in the House now, and they bring their women friends and the wives and daughters of their constituents down to see them

and the Terrace is one flood of billowy petticoats. I wish you could come down some evening and see it. A member wanting to shew a lady something through *Lady Saxon's*[1] door might naturally ask her to come and look at the curious little grassy and monastical enclosure on the other side. A member inciting another not to miss a division would very likely say : "Look here old man, you'll catch it if you miss this division—I'll tell your whips where I saw you." You might say something about the tea-parties of the Speaker's daughter at her end of the Terrace. I'll find out exactly what the buildings at the other extreme actually are. It *is* the Strangers' smoking-room that opens into the terrace. You had better come and have a look over the place—the whole place—some day next week—but if you cannot I will send you a few descriptive lines about the dinner-party to-morrow, it is too late to-night. I can put in a few really good descriptive lines. . . .

'. . . I send you a few lines for your book. I am glad to have some little part in it as I had in all your other books since I came to know you. . . . I was at a dinner-party every night in this House or out of it, this week. I am dining at the Savoy or being taken to a theatre to-night. Good Lord! What a merry life I lead! And how merry I feel!' June 27, '93.

'. . . I have just come back from the House of Commons. We have a sort of peace in our ranks for the moment—but there is not, I fear, anything permanent in it . . . Our relations with the Government, on the other hand, are very satisfactory just now. But the Bill makes hardly any progress. And the Session is running on while the Bill only crawls. Our friend Mrs. Forbes had tea with me on the Terrace—or rather not on the Terrace but in one of the rooms—last evening. We could not get a table or even a seat on the Terrace for love or money. . . . The whole thing seemed in curious contrast to the distracting political anxieties which were there and have long been tormenting my mind.' June 25, '93.

'I did not get home this morning until five! To-morrow night I shall dine at the Mansion House, invited as one of the representatives of Literature and Art—much I have had to do lately with Literature and Art! And later on I must put in an appearance at a dinner given in the National Liberal June 30, '93.

[1] A character in *The Rival Princess.*

Club to our friend General Collins—and I shall probably have to make a speech at both places—and I was to have dined with the Cobden Club at Greenwich—but I really can't possibly accomplish that. How long do you stay in town ? '

No date. ' I accomplished two of my dinners and spoke at each. I went first to the Mansion House, where I got planted down next Mrs. Normand—Henrietta Rae—about whose works, to tell you the truth, I knew little or nothing—but I am told she is very clever. . . . My speech came on rather late, and I spoke about four sentences and then went off to the dinner at the Liberal Club where I made a longer oration, and then got home sick of dinners and of speech-making.

' You really ought not to go tearing round to garden parties and Empire theatres and all the rest of it. Why not accept the situation and keep quiet ? You don't really care about these things, and anyhow you are in no physical condition for them.'

House of Commons, July 11. '93. ' I am sorry I cannot go to Woodlands on Wednesday. . . . I could not leave this place even for half an hour, and at night I am to speak at a political dinner. I wanted so much to write to you yesterday, but literally had not time. There was a great crisis going on here, and for hours we dared not leave our seats. . . . I am very glad that you are to stay at Woodlands and that the quietude and air are already doing you good. . . . '

House of Commons, July 14, ' We have at present to keep in close attendance at this House, and it grows so monotonous and weary that the sense aches at it.

' I hardly read anything but the newspapers. I write nothing but leading articles and political letters—and I dine out on the Wednesday, Saturdays and Sundays. There is the programme for the time. . . . It pleases me to think of you resting among your quiet woods and away for the present from this dreary unliterary London—to which I am condemned just now. . . . '

July 24, '93. ' Your praise of my " Dictator " is altogether the pleasantest thing I have heard for many a long day . . . I wish you had helped in it. I often—so very often missed your help. . . . '

House of Commons, July 27. ' I wonder if this will find you at Woodlands, where I send it on chance. It is written in all the heat and passion of the first great division of a night which is to be signalised by a

scene unparalleled in the House of Commons of our day—a regular "row" with many blows interchanged. There was such a tumult that no one seems quite able to say who struck the first blow, but the concurrence of testimony seems to point to Colonel Saunderson as the beginner. At all events he was in the melée, hitting out and being hit. The whole thing was scandalous, shameful, sickening—an unspeakable degradation to the English Parliament. I saw but little of it personally, for I was actually beginning this letter in one of the division lobbies when I heard the clamour of the riot and rushed to find out what was going on. I am writing now in the same division lobby, and in the next chair to me is Gladstone himself scratching off a letter with all the energy of a young lover writing to his sweetheart. . . . Another division has gone. I have had quite a friendly talk with Saunderson. He says he didn't begin the fight—that it was begun by two English members—that in self-defence he hit out and struck by accident an Irish member—that the Irish member struck back, as is indeed the custom of the country, and that he—Colonel Saunderson—got much the worst of it. From all I can hear, I believe it did begin—I mean the actual striking—between two English members. But the House was aflame with passion, and anything might have been expected except perhaps actual blows.'

'We have had quiet times since the fearful "row." I saw Gladstone yesterday—we had arranged a conference with him about the Home Rule Bill, and he pressed for our opinion whether any steps ought to be taken by the House to record its condemnation of the riot. I, for myself, answered "yes, emphatically yes." He asked me about this and that exciting moment in modern parliamentary history—say a hundred years back—and whether, in that time, blows had been exchanged on the floor of the House of Commons. I said, according to my reading, "emphatically no," and he said that was his reading also. But I don't fancy anything will be done. The Speaker is for dropping the whole affair—a profound mistake I think, an admission that the House of Commons regards a free fight—the first free fight ever known there—on its own benches, as a matter of no serious importance. House of Commons, July 29, '93.

'I hope you are getting on well. I am going next Saturday

to stay until Monday at Quex Park, Birchington. Do you remember Birchington and Dante Rossetti's grave ? '

House of Commons, July 31. '93.

' There was a short debate in the House this afternon on the riot of Thursday. Gladstone, Balfour, Sir Henry James and I took part in it. The result was—indirectly at least—a complete exculpation of the Irish members. Two men were called upon to make a public apology—and did make it. They were two English members—a Liberal and a Tory. They were the men who began the riot, and the House held it that in them the responsibility rested. The name of no Irish Nationalist member was mentioned by anyone. I only spoke in order to point to the fact that the Tory and the Unionist press everywhere had jumped to the conclusion that *we* were the cause of the tumult, and to emphasize the manner in which to-day's proceedings relieved us from the charge.'

Aug. 19, '93.

' Yes . . . you may be quite sure that what I wrote was exactly my critical opinion. I have always thought that where rising authors are concerned, undue praise is even a more cruel thing than undue censure. Undue censure never does much harm to any man or woman in the end, but I think undue praise has often done much harm. The quotation you ask for is in " King Lear," and this is its exact wording :

> ' " The Gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
> Make instruments to plague us."

' . . . How I am to get my work through by the end of September I do not know in the least, but I suppose it will get done somehow. Even of my leader-article work I am becoming ashamed. It is done amid such difficulties and interruptions that it seems to have neither shape nor form.'

House of Commons, Sept. 7, '93.

' I ought to have answered your letter before this but I had a great many letters to write concerning practical politics which could not be put off. Is not that the way of life—the things you would like to do may be put off : the things you don't want to do may *not* . . . At Taplow, the weather was divine. Charlotte punted now and again . . . I did nothing but lounge on the lawn. If I can get a fortnight's rest at the seaside I shall be only too well contented. To add to the comfort of London we are threatened with cholera—beginning —where do you think ?—in the House of Commons. Such is the story to-day—that one of the women attendants died this

morning of genuine cholera. The woman did die certainly after a very short attack of some kind. Many members are greatly alarmed. I am not. . . .'

'I was sorry I could not go to luncheon with you to-day but my worthy doctor would not let me go out, except to take two or three turns up and down the Gardens in the sun. This is my fifth day indoors, and do you know I rather enjoyed it—the compulsory idleness. I had grown so weary of Parliament that any relief was welcome. . . . Saturday and Sunday I was positively incapable of doing anything. Now I have to finish, if I possibly can before the end of the month, one other article for the *North American Review*—one biography of Daniel O'Connell for an American cyclopedia—and one longish story and two shorter ones for Tillotson. I expect the Tillotson stories or some of them will have to be delayed. And I am to have a long novel—three-volume business—ready by the 1st of March. And the House will sit for nearly a fortnight yet, and will resume its sittings on the 2nd of November!' Sept. 13, '93.

'I had a dim idea that you might perhaps be able to come and see me while you were in town. But of course I knew that you would have lots of things to do. . . . I took my first walk to-day—my first real walk for many months. When I see you next I hope to be able to tramp through the woods.' Skindle's, Maidenhead, Sept. 16, '93.

'I was delighted to get your letter and much relieved when your two volumes came to hand. . . . I shall begin to read them to-night, and will mark in pencil any alterations that seem necessary to me, and will give you my sincere and earnest opinion over the two volumes. You may be sure I shall have in mind all your suggestions about style and everything else.' Southsea, Oct. 1, '93.

'I have just got back from luncheon at Dora Chamberlain's. Wyndham was there, and he certainly talked most enthusiastically about "The Right Honourable." He said it had some of the finest dramatic situations and some of the strongest scenes he had ever met with, and declared that it could have been made into a splendid play. I modestly questioned this, but he re-affirmed it—and said he would have been only too delighted to have the chance of such a play before Jones brought out "The Bauble Shop." 73 Eaton Terrace, Oct. 18, '93.

'I have got your telegram and send this accordingly. I London, Oct. 27.

enclose my Algerian notes. I wonder whether you will be able to decipher them. I have written over the shorthand in some places, and thereby, it is quite possible, made it harder to understand than before. However, you will perhaps be able to get some hints from them. I do hope you have had a pleasant, or at least, a not too fatiguing journey thus far. I shall be anxious to hear from you when you get to Cannes. In the meantime I want this to reach you as a greeting.

'I have read your proofs and sent them back. Only mere little corrections needed.

'Do not believe anything you see in the papers about Irish politics. Whatever is real, I shall be sure to let you know.'

House of Commons, Nov. 2, '93.

'I am glad to know that you are quietly and comfortably settled down at Cannes again. You will see that I, less fortunately, am unquietly and uncomfortably settled down here again. I don't like it. The House is particularly dismal to-night. Not many men have yet come back. The weather is rainy, dreary, dark. The subject before the House is dull. The brightest and freshest looking man that I have seen to-day is Gladstone. I have not yet had a chance of speaking with him. I think I should even welcome a "row."—We shall have some such in our own party probably a little later on—in preference to this portentous dulness. I wish I had the buoyant spirits of my countrymen in "Wolfe Tone."

'My Siamese prince has just come to town from Paris. I shall go to see him, and then tell you all about him.'

Nov. 24, '93.

'. . . Political affairs with me have somewhat improved. The storm has blown over for the present—a meeting of the party has unanimously approved in every point the policy of the committee and of myself. We had a debate that lasted nearly twelve hours! Healy did not come: he remains in Ireland. The trouble is over for the present, but it will come up again.

'For myself, I do not suppose I shall ever have a satisfactory time of it until I am out of politics and back to my literary work. But when will that be? "Mass," as the clown in "Hamlet" says, "I cannot tell." Not certainly before the next general election—I could not possibly leave the party now and put them to a struggle over the question of leadership. I feel weary of all this—weary in good truth of

most things. I seem to lose the sense of enjoyment—if there were anything to enjoy. Perhaps, however, this fact will be more easily intelligible when I say that on Wednesday last, the 22nd, I attained the respectable age of sixty-three! About time to be losing one's youthful sense of enjoyment—is it not? . . . Yet the odd thing is that I *don't* feel old, and I *can't* feel old—though I tell myself every day that I *am* old.'

'. . . I am doing some work for the *Daily News*—an article on an important book—the autobiography of Wolfe Tone—which is to be published on Monday, and the article is to appear the same day. It is a big book in two volumes, and I want to get it done before I finish my article for the *North American Review*. The "Wolfe Tone" book is a pleasure to me, for he was always a great hero of mine.' 73 Eaton Terrace, Dec. 12, '93.

'. . . I was distressed to-day by hearing the news of the sudden death of Edward Stanhope, Philip Stanhope's elder brother. I was talking to him in the House only two or three days ago. At one time I knew him very well, and, although we did not meet so often of late, he was always most nice and friendly when we did meet. I was out of the House—in one of the committee rooms when his death was announced. I should like to have added a few words to those spoken by Balfour and Harcourt. I liked him well.' Dec. 22, '93.

'. . . I must write you a line or two to reach you on Christmas Day. I hope it will reach you on Christmas morning. . . . Dec. 23, '93.

'I want to send you my word of Christmas greeting, if to make it clear that there is one at least outside your own family circle who wishes for your happiness. . . .

'As for me . . . I am sometimes a little tired of the whole mechanical round of more or less futile work. . . . I do not know whether I shall really see the complete success of the Home Rule movement, and am sometimes sadly inclined to throw up the sponge and withdraw from the fight. . . . I have outlived much—but after all, I have had my life and I have lived a great deal, and seen much and known many people—and so I am quite sure that I ought not really to grumble.

'. . . I regret nothing. I do not want to have anything changed. "Thou shalt renounce," says Faust, "is the lesson of life." But one need not renounce all, even in life. I have had to renounce a good many hopes and expectations—every

one has—but there is something still for which to do homage to the kindly Fates. . . . For myself, I have outlived the day of drama. Never again—for me at least. "I cease to live," says Egmont in Goethe's play—"but I *have* lived!" That is my feeling almost exactly. But there are things in life worth having as well as the dramatic and the emotional. I am perhaps sorry to leave these behind—but what can one do—they *are* left behind.'

CHAPTER XXIII

THE GOAL MISSED

The growing tendency in Mr. McCarthy to a deeper melancholy than those fits of half poetic brooding, of which he had been used to make whimsical mock, and the gradual quenching of his buoyant appreciation of all things beautiful and interesting in life, could not fail to strike anybody who has followed his record of himself to this point. Of course the change was in large part due to the strain of all these years, since he had entered political life; or rather—for he had entered Parliament with the highest hope and enthusiasm and on the wave of his great success with 'The History of Our Own Times'—to the severer struggle of the past few years. Had he been a rich man, the mere political stress would not have told so heavily upon him and he might still have indulged himself along the line of work which he loved best. But when loss of money, through the disaster of the Irish Exhibition, forced him to grind at journalism and to do 'pot-boilers' in the shape of novels of an inferior stamp to those old favourites 'Dear Lady Disdain' 'Donna Quixote,' 'Maid of Athens,' and others of his earlier works, the highly cultured mind, which had always striven for the best in literature, suffered in a way that was infinitely pathetic. He faced the blows Fate dealt him, making the best of misfortune, lest he should distress those who were

dear to him, but for the rest he did not care. As his literary colleague, it was my privilege to be his 'safety-valve,' and, if I may be permitted the egoistic gratulation, it has indeed rejoiced me that the sympathy I was able to give him may have helped a little to lighten his heavy burden of disappointment. For the human being and the thing upon which he had set his heart's best hopes were Parnell and the Irish Cause. He had given himself up to both so wholeheartedly: he had followed Parnell with such utter loyalty, until, as he has said, loyalty became impossible. The blow that broke him, in reality, was Parnell's failure to justify his follower's trust. There would seem to have come a change over the letters and upon Mr. McCarthy's outlook on life from that memorable day in January 1890, when, just as he was leaving Cannes, he heard the news about Parnell and the O'Shea divorce suit.

I remember his once saying, 'People would be unable to understand how much this National Cause has been the religion of my life.'

And now, in the last Session of Parliament with Mr. Gladstone in power, the time had come when he must look the loss of his life's stake straight in the face. There had been a flicker of hope when Mr. Gladstone passed his second Home Rule Bill through the Commons. Mr. McCarthy, of course, foresaw its rejection by the Lords—that was inevitable. Yet when the Upper Chamber threw out the Bill—for which, out of 560 peers only 41 voted—he still had hopes. There were rumours that Mr. Gladstone would dissolve Parliament on a greater issue than any previous one he had raised, and that, with reform of the Lords imminent, the Home Rule Bill would finally be passed. That unfortunate Bill! Misbegotten—like a soul seeking birth out of due season, it was doomed to extinction—at least in the lifetime of many who had seen it draw very near fulfilment.

Soon after the rejection of the Bill by the House of Lords, Mr. Gladstone announced his resignation.

The slow tale of hope, anxiety, and final discouragement proceeds with the letters. From the time that the Parnell scandal—and, with it, the imperilment of the Nationalist Cause—became a certainty, Mr. McCarthy's health, already undermined by the incessant strain of journalism and politics, had failed steadily, and, worse than that, his spirit had begun to break.

All through his letters, the change can be seen gradually progressing. Though he fought bravely on until physical collapse forced him to retire from the arena, he did so in full realisation that he was sacrificing himself for a lost cause—lost at least for his generation.

It is true that he had not counted it as sacrifice. I am sure that till the final stage, he felt that he was fulfilling the dream of his life. To him, it was, literally, as a turning of the captivity of Zion, and he believed that doubtless he also should come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

Those nearest of heart and kin, for whom he broke down the walls of his natural reserve, understood the romantic patriotism, the ardent purpose which burned in that gentle, unobtrusive personality. Those of his colleagues who were in near sympathy with him knew and understood. They realised the tragedy. A little incident occurs to me, which may be mentioned here. Some few years ago—after Mr. McCarthy's retirement—I was taking tea on the Terrace of the House of Commons, with Mr. T. P. O'Connor and a small party of friends, for the first time after a long absence from that scene once so familiar to me in association with my literary colleague. Thus, it was not strange that I should feel a certain melancholy. Mr. John Dillon was sitting next me and we fell into talk about our old friend.

Then, the words that I have written above came, in gist, but with more force and fullness, from Mr. Dillon's lips. And many more words of affection, indeed of reverence for the disinterested loyalty of the man we were discussing. There is a sad pleasure in recalling now those expressions of devoted appreciation.

After the New Year, Mr. McCarthy writes to me in Cannes, from London.

Jan. 22, '94.

'. . . This is not meant to be a letter but only an instant word of thanks for your most welcome account of yourself. I think you might some time make a lively chapter in a novel out of your experience in an influenza-beleaguered Riviera hotel. . . . It might perhaps amuse you to read a little sketch —or story—I wrote, under great pressure of solicitations, for a Catholic newspaper owned by a political colleague of mine. It is not wholly fanciful. . . .'

The story, 'The Banshee,' relates to a legend in Mr. McCarthy's family that the head of the house, when dying, hears the banshee, or it is heard by those around him.

73 Eaton Terrace, Feb. 9, '94.

'Everything goes on just in the old way here. Nothing whatever has happened, and I suppose that, as the world goes, it is matter for thanksgiving that nothing has happened, for if anything did happen it would be almost sure to be something unpleasant. I work at my novel whenever I can, and I write heaps of political letters, chiefly arising just now out of Blake's visit to the States and Canada as ambassador on our account. . . .

'The House of Commons reopens on Monday. It then winds up the business of the Session, and then, after a day or two of formal prorogation, the new Session will begin.

'There are few people in town. I went to Lady Dorothy's to luncheon on Sunday. There were some interesting people there—among others, Sir Redvers Buller and Moberly Bell, the manager of *The Times*.'

Feb. 14, '94.

'I have been reading your first volume. I think it extremely well done artistically, but my trouble is that I can't

get to like your heroine. I know you won't mind my giving my opinion point-blank, and that you would not care one straw for mere compliments—that you would in fact consider them as utterly out of place between you and me. Well—I *don't* like her. She is still too self-centred and too morbid. She does not seem so far—I have not quite finished the first volume—to get into her mind the idea that other human beings suffer as she does. This may come to be different in the second volume, but, so far, that is my impression. Of course, you might say that you meant to picture this kind of morbid, self-centred, utterly selfish nature—as a sort of pathological study. Of course, if you really mean it for a pathological study of a nature thus entirely self-absorbed—as that of the Fakir who spends all his life contemplating his own stomach—then it is *very well* done. But do you mean this? I am sure you do not. But I want to give you my ideas absolutely as they come to me. You would, I know, shew the same absolute frankness to me under like conditions.

'. . . The House is still sitting, and as you will easily imagine I spend most of my time there. You said that I do not tell you much about myself. . . . Dear friend, the reason why I tell you nothing is because there is absolutely nothing to tell. . . . My life runs on just now as colourless as a subterranean stream. The reason why I do not seem to enjoy anything is, in part no doubt, work and rather bad health—but it also comes from the darkening of the prospect in every direction which I can look at. . . . I am rather weary of the whole business of life. But I shall fight it all out the best that I can. I daresay I am myself, like your heroine—a good deal too self-centred.'

'We are in the thick of a political crisis here. Gladstone is resolved on resigning—will have resigned perhaps before you receive this, and the question as to his successor is fiercely fought out. It is a question between Lord Rosebery and Sir William Harcourt. Rosebery is by far the more popular with the country in general, but many of the more extreme Radicals are dead against a Prime Minister in the House of Lords. We—the Irish—hold an absolutely neutral position. We will support either man if he gives us sufficient guarantee about Home Rule; neither man if he does not. We are absolute masters of the situation, for we hold the fate of any

Mar. 2, '94.

government in the hollow of our hands. But I am sure that either Rosebery or Harcourt will give us the necessary pledges, and either will have to stick to them. I need hardly tell you how much all this occupies me. . . . We have frequent conferences of our committee, and I am haunted and pestered by interviewers. I heard last night what we must assume to have been Mr. Gladstone's last speech as Prime Minister. It was splendidly delivered. It was a call to the country to do battle against the tyranny of the House of Lords. I cannot tell you what an emotional time it was while he was speaking that last speech. One's mind went back and back, and it seemed like the sinking for ever of some sun. At last, the sun went out in a blaze of light and splendour.'

73 Eaton Terrace, Mar. 9, '93.

'. . . I had a long, and to my mind, very affecting interview with Gladstone on Monday at Downing Street. He asked me to come and see him. He appeared to me to be in capital health and spirits. He talked with quite a youthful buoyancy and energy. I had gone to see him in quite a nervous condition of mind, fearing that it would be a melancholy affair and that perhaps his increasing deafness might make it hard for me to tell him what I felt. But he at once relieved me. We were quite alone in the big upstairs room in Downing Street, and he made me sit close to him, at his best side for hearing, and then he streamed away into the most delightful talk—no sad word—no minor key about it—all hopeful, bright, and strong. He told me many anecdotes drawn from his past experience. He told me that he would have left public life long ago, only for his intense devotion to the cause of Ireland. In the end, I rose to go, and he said quite fervently, "Well, God bless you and your country and your cause—God bless you all."

'I went away, those words still ringing in my ears. Crossing St. James' Place, I happened to meet Lord Ripon, and we had a talk. He told me that the one and only cause of Gladstone's resignation is the trouble about his sight. Indeed, I did not need to be told this, for the letter he had written to me with his own hand, asking me to call on him, shewed it only too clearly and too painfully. Needless to say that I shall always keep that letter. It tells, in its very writing, a sad, and what is truly a memorable and historical story.

'I have hopes that everything will go well with Home Rule.

I trust that we shall be able to screw up Lord Rosebery to the right point. I have had a time of incessant work—committees, conferences, the fixing of interviews and the writing of letters. Your second volume has, I am afraid, been sadly neglected, but this acute stage of the crisis will not last long, and by the middle of the next week we shall settle down. . . .'

'. . . I have never gone through such a week of incessant occupation in politics. I have been in daily conference with this, that and the other man—and we have held several meetings of our party—some of them lasting eight hours on end—none of them occupying less than four hours. We are torn by internal dissensions, and, all the while, some of us have to keep up a good appearance in the more or less futile hope of concealing from the world the true and ominous story of our trouble. Yes—I should have done better if I had kept to my literary work. I do not even know whether I have really been able to do any good for the national cause—and I have now and then some spasms of sickening doubt as to whether we are yet quite fitted for that self-government which comes so easily and naturally to English and Americans. However, these are only spasms, and I don't let them carry me away—" that way madness lies."

73 Eaton Terrace, Mar. 16, '94.

'I like you to tell me exactly what you think about my later literary work. It is the first duty and right of friendship to be absolutely sincere. And besides, I agree with you altogether. " The Dictator " began with a good idea, but it ran off into nothingness. The conditions under which it was carried on made good work absolutely impossible. My mind was never allowed to go on the story, and the thing was written against time. If I ever have a free hand again I shall try to do a good novel. My mind does go back these times to the days of " The Right Honourable." . . . I have been suffering a good deal from sheer fatigue, physical and mental—but the immediate pressure of the crisis is over, and I am beginning to feel much better already. I had to preside at the St. Patrick's dinner last night, and to make two speeches. Blake was there and made the best speech of the evening. I had looked forward to the occasion with dread, but I did not, when all was over, feel any the worse for it.

'This is, I am afraid, a gloomy sort of letter, but I can't

make it other, and you will quite understand. We shall be able to talk things over soon.'

73 Eaton Terrace, Mar. 27, '94.

'This is your birthday, dear colleague—" or I do forget myself," as Hamlet says. I want this to reach you before the day is out, and to give you my best and warmest wishes for birthdays yet to come.

'There are some important meetings on in Dublin, and most of the leading men of my committee have gone over. I preferred to stay in London, and undertook the responsibilities accordingly. I am the man in possession. The Secretary of our Committee comes to me several times a day . . . with requests for instructions on this and that and the other matter, including telegrams and cablegrams. . . . The House meets on Thursday. Perhaps I may be able to go to Woodlands some day next week.'

April 6, '94.

'. . . There is an acute political crisis at hand. The Government have lately—last night especially—been winning by painfully small majorities—one reason being that some of our men hang back and cannot be brought over from Ireland —some of them because they cannot afford the expense, and we at present have no funds—and some because they are in a semi-mutinous condition and would be rather pleased than not if the Government were to be overthrown. In fact, the Government is in much greater danger than is known to the public or even to the newspapers.'

April 18, '94.

'. . . Last Sunday was as busy to me as a week-day; for I had to go to a big meeting at three o'clock, and it lasted for hours, and I had a conference at my house after dinner. I made a speech an hour and a half in length—all about the necessity of getting rid of dissensions. I hope it may do good, but I am not very sanguine. Well, well—let us turn from all this. I have finished your second volume. I am deeply impressed with the story.

'. . . The novel is undoubtedly very strong and clever—but also very painful. I feel utterly puzzled as to whether I like it or dislike it. It seems uncanny and creepy. Sometimes I am reminded of a soul imprisoned in a dead body.' [1]

April 22, '94.

'. . . I had not the ghost of a chance of going to Woodlands to-day. We had fixed a political conference for four

[1] *The Scourge-Stick.*

o'clock. It went on until some of us had to rush away and dress for dinner. I was dining at the Hôtel Métropole, at a dinner given by General Collins to Augustin Daly. The American Ambassador, Mr. Bayard, sat next to me, and I found him a most charming companion. To-day's conference was held at William O'Brien's house. . . . I am dying—almost literally dying of Parliament and politics—and yet I don't see how, just at this moment, I can hope for release.'

'. . . I am glad on the whole to hear of the resolution you have taken. . . . You are not made for the ordinary life of London, and you could not really care about it. You will be much happier at Woodlands among the trees with your children and later on travelling with them and in some sort renewing your youth. . . . I shall hope to come and see you at Woodlands sometimes. I shall hope to come when I shall have managed to get through my story—an end to which I look forward now as the famishing garrison looks to the approach of relief.' May 4, '94.

'. . . Nothing would delight me more, and soothe me more, than to go to you on Sunday, and have the chance of a talk with you after luncheon. But I can't do it. I am going to Liverpool to-morrow to attend the annual Convention of the Irish National League. . . . I well remember a meeting of the same Convention in Manchester some years ago, to which I took down either the MS. or the proofs of "The Soul of Countess Adrian," and beguiled spare intervals between making and listening to speeches by the study of your novel.' May 11, '94.

'. . . I had to put in a visit to Liverpool, and to go through three days of meetings, speechmakings, dinners, luncheons and political conferences enough to turn one's brain. Do you know what I did one day? You may remember perhaps that I passed some seven years of my very early manhood in Liverpool. There I fell in love—and there I got married. Well, I have often been in Liverpool since that—but only rushing through or spending a mere night. I wandered out the other day and visited all the old haunts—the house where I first met my wife—the places where we walked together—the house where we first lived when we were married—the house where we lived later on—the house where we lived last in Liverpool before casting in our lot with London—and so on. What a strange sort of walk I had that day! Ghosts attended me at May 17, '94.

every step—and indeed I felt like nothing but a ghost myself. You know my dismal way of haunting spots where I have been either very happy or very miserable. As I wandered through these Liverpool streets of my youth and my early manhood and my marriage and all the rest, I became curiously and painfully impressed with a sense of the whole pitifulness of life—of the unmeaningness of it—and I think I was rather glad to get back to a political meeting—because it took me out of myself and my own brooding and ghost-like thoughts.'

73 Eaton Terrace, May 20, '94.

'. . . Last night I went to Pembroke Lodge, to dine with Lady Russell—and the drive to and from Richmond station is pretty long, and the night became fearfully cold—and this morning I woke with a cough which would do credit to a champion victim of bronchitis. So I had to stay at home and try all I can to get well. . . .

'And all the time I have had a very plague of political correspondence—and worries—some of them paltry, pecuniary, personal worries coming between one and all his better thoughts and better nature, just as a grain of dust in the eye destroys for one the charm of landscape.'

June 19, '94.

'. . . I mean to send you some little gift, dear Colleague, on the 28th of June, in fulfilment of the usage of so many years. Only I don't know what it ought to be: and so I ask you. Is there any book you would care to have? I should like to give you something that you would wish to have.'

June 23, '94.

'I shall be delighted to send you the "Marcus Aurelius," and I am sure you will enjoy reading it. I am deeply interested in your account of your studies with M——, and I am satisfied that you have got upon the right way of making history live for her from the very beginning—unfold itself in living and yet in dramatic reality—not the sort of cramming which, as some great person said, turns history into an old almanac.'

June 28, '94.

'. . . I was at a dinner-party last night to which you had been bidden—at Miss Washington Jackson's. It was quite a brilliant little gathering—but I had to leave before dinner was actually over—to attend a consultation with lawyers about the Paris funds—a French lawyer having come over from Paris and having to return this morning. So my dinner-party was "queered." Then I went to the *Daily News* and wrote on the election of the new President. . . .'

July 11, '94.

'. . . How are you faring along, dear Colleague? I should

like to hear when you have a little time to spare. . . . Nothing has happened since I saw you—except that I actually went—or was taken—to see Réjane in "Madame Sans Gêne." I was called for, conveyed there and brought home by the friendly Hancocks. The play I thought poor and dull—the acting generally good—the acting of Réjane admirable. But I have fallen curiously out of the way of going to plays—and indeed of enjoying them. . . .'

'. . . I have nothing to tell you of except utter trivialities —luncheons, dinners, and so on. I am dining in the House to-morrow evening to meet our old friend Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, who has just come to town after having undergone a successful operation for cataract in one eye, and is awaiting an operation later on, and I hope equally successful, in the other. He is close on to seventy-nine years of age, and is, I am told, as brisk and bright as ever. I saw him one evening last session and he certainly seemed wonderfully youthful then. Do you remember a lecture of mine—somewhere on the south side I think, to which you came, and over which he presided? That, I suppose, must be four or five years ago. I do hope I shall not be alive up to seventy-eight. It must all grow so tiresome, I think, when one knows that there is nothing likely to come which could give one any joy, and so many things that might even still come to give one ever so much pain. . . .' July 15, '94.

'I am deeply interested in your plans. You will tell me all about them when I see you next. . . . Most gladly would I go and see you . . . but we are at a political crisis at present with our evicted tenants bill and the House of Lords, and I can't venture out of town. For the last five or six Saturdays we have had political conferences here in this room which have sometimes lasted over several hours. Nor is Sunday always any better. . . . In about three weeks' time the House will be up, and then I shall be practically free so far as Parliament is concerned. But I shall probably have to go to Ireland—and there is my novel that must be finished. Well, well—I need not bore you with all this. There it is, and it can't be helped. . . . Everybody who sets up for being anybody is out of town except the leaders of Government and Opposition. There is not a house in London at the doors of which I could knock with the faintest hope of finding anybody Aug. 12, '94.

at home. I went to my last dinner-party for this season last Wednesday—a dinner given to bring Bayard, the American Ambassador, into acquaintanceship with the leading members of the various parliamentary parties. It was a good idea and was very successfully carried out. It was a pleasant gathering—except for the fact that some of us were quite unexpectedly called on to make speeches.'

73 Eaton Terrace, Aug. 15, '94.

'Our letters must have crossed, dear colleague. I was very glad to get yours—although it is, as you say, melancholy—but then as you also say, I am somewhat of ghost-like mood myself. I was much touched by your allusion to the glimpse of the Terrace and its lights which you caught from Waterloo bridge. . . . Yes, we had some pleasant hours on that Terrace—all that part of one's life seems a dream. And you are going away so soon as early November! That is sudden. Most sincerely do I hope that when you come back you will have a long, calm life before you. . . . For myself I feel dazed about things. Ten years have passed since you and I first knew each other, and sometimes it seems to me but yesterday that we first met and at other times as if a whole eternity had intervened between then and now! And the house in Norfolk Square is let—and you are going away, and I am contemplating the possibility of a permanent settlement in America. It does look like a general break-up, does it not—I mean in the little world of you and me and a few others. . . .'

Aug. 17, '94.

'And you are going so soon! On your own account, I am glad of it. The whole thing will strengthen you and revive you. It will give you material for a fresh book, and you will grow young again—if indeed there is any particular advantage in that. I seem to feel the long separation ominous—and I don't know where I may be when you come back. Things are troublous here in many ways—politically and personally. . . .'

The voyage and long absence of which Mr. McCarthy makes mention was a trip to Australia for the purpose of seeing how one of my sons—who accompanied me—would like to settle down in my native country. The trip on which we started in the November of that year lengthened itself into a journey round the world.

Now Mr. McCarthy writes from Herne Bay :

'. . . I got here on Saturday in a very broken-down condition, but have been reviving wonderfully under the influence of the sea and the air and the glorious weather. I have just received urgent letters calling on me to summon at once a meeting of the Irish party in Dublin, and to preside over it. But they might as well ask me to travel to the Ural Mountains just now as to travel to Dublin. . . .' Herne Bay, Aug. 28, '94.

'. . . You may be sure that if I were resolved to give up the chairmanship of the Irish party I should have let you know at once. But the papers exaggerate everything, and the thing has got not nearly so far as that just yet. It is really a tornado in a tea-pot, but it may come to something serious. The whole business is this : Sept. 10, '94.

'Since I came down here, I received a letter from Lord Tweedmouth (he was Marjoribanks, whip of the Liberal party) enclosing a cheque for £100 from Gladstone and £100 from himself towards the expenses of the Irish parliamentary struggle. I thought it a graceful and touching proof of sympathy. I assumed that Gladstone, out of office for ever, thought the time had come when he was free to send a subscription to our national cause and that he had authorised Tweedmouth to follow his example. This was in fact the correct interpretation. I acknowledged the contributions to Gladstone and Tweedmouth separately with gratitude and with friendship, and I sent the cheques to Dublin to be formally acknowledged. I never thought any more about it. The *Freeman's Journal* took my view and applauded the whole transaction. Healy and some of his friends denounced it furiously as a surrender of Ireland's independence to the Liberal party—not so much for the sake of attacking *me* as for attacking those whom I am supposed to favour. . . . The controversy rages and has become a scandal. But it will probably soon flicker away, there is no real life to keep it alive. Personally, as you know, I should be only too glad to get a fair opportunity of retiring, but I do not think it will come to this. . . .'

'I have been rushing up and down the line between London and Herne Bay during the last few days, dear Colleague —partly because of the *Daily News*—and partly to hold London, Sept. 21, '94.

conferences with Dr. Emmet, President of the American Home Rule Federation—who has come all across the ocean to talk with us about our present quarrels. I am to see him again to-night, and he sails for New York to-morrow. He is, I am glad to say, thoroughly on my side of the dispute. I return to-morrow to Herne Bay and then come up for good and all on Monday. . . .'

Oct. 25, '94. 'I have been busied very much by the release of the Paris funds since I saw you, and which caused the meeting with lawyers and the signing of all manner of documents and the writing of ever so many letters. I shall tell you when we next meet of the almost romantic difficulties connected with the transfer of some forty-four thousand pounds from Paris to London. Something might be made for a short story or the chapter of a novel out of it. . . .

'Did I tell you of "The Hundred of Great Britain"[1]—Stead's project? Yes, I am sure I did. What a grand, not to say grandiose title—"The Hundred of Great Britain!" Well, anyhow, a photographer came the other day from London Stereoscopic Company to make a study of one of the Hundred. He made several studies and stayed very long. . . .'

The following refers to my trip to Australia and contemplated return by Java, Japan, and America. Mr. McCarthy had interested himself in getting letters of introduction for me to certain official personages in Java.

Oct. 27. 'I enclose a line I have had from Sir Edward Grey, the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs—about your visit to Java. It is sure to be all right. There can be no difficulty about it. . . . And you are going away, and I don't know where I may be when you come back!'

[1] A publication consisting of biographical notices with portraits of a hundred eminent living men of Great Britain.

CHAPTER XXIV

A GIRDLE ROUND THE EARTH

In respect of the subject-matter of this year's letters, speaking from the personal point of view, the following chapter, of the end of 1894 and best part of 1895, seems not so much a record of Mr. McCarthy's thoughts and doings as a sort of magic lantern-show of ever-changing scenes and impressions into which my literary colleague's letters—which I found at many ports—brought but faint and distant echoes of what was going on at the other side of the world. So now, as I sort and re-read the familiar type-script, there flashes, with each fresh-dated page, some resplendent and incongruous picture of the far-away place and conditions in which the letter was received.

We broke our voyage by a mail length at Ceylon in order to visit the buried city—then not long unearthed from the jungle—of Anuradhapura ; and it was at Kandy, on our way back from this expedition, that the first batch of English letters reached us.

Thus, the very suggestion in them of London wrapped in November fog calls up to mind a contrasting vision of the dream-like Lake of Kandy, with its palms and whispering bamboos, and the slender pillars and pierced white marble coping of the wicked Rajah's palace upon its bank. There, again, are the bungalows dotting the hills, almost hidden in

tropical greenery ; and the Temple of the Sacred Tooth, on its massive granite base, shows its pointed roof and white octagonal tower against a veritable Oriental sky.

I seem to see in strange juxtaposition with the scenes of which my literary colleague writes—the great sculptured elephants, the garish, painted gods, the ancient, carved doors, the long, dim colonnades and temple courts, the glittering shrine and high altar heaped with lotus and champak blooms. And I hear anew, the mysterious chanting, the beat of tom-toms, as the processions of yellow-robed priests file along. Again I scent the heavy odour of tropic flowers, and, through that fantastic medley of sights, sounds, perfumes, impressions, breathe afresh for a moment the enchanted atmosphere of the East.

Then, a second packet, caught at the post office just in time to be handed in as the train glided forth on its many hours' journey through the Australian bush. And there was the devouring of home news as we rushed along through a wilderness of eucalyptus : here and there, a township of slab and sheet-iron or a selector's homestead set in a paddock of gaunt, white skeleton gums—corpses of trees in interminable ranks and phalanxes that, as dusk crept on, seemed to advance stealthily like some ghostly army of the Wild.

Or when, after a three weeks' ocean passage, the boat comes into an Eastern port again, one rises to find the wind-sail gone and a steamy sun pouring through the porthole, and to hear the many noises—shouting of orders, creak of rope, grating of cable, chaffering of native dealers round the vessel—which prelude disembarkment. Then the eager anxiety for the arrival of a tender with the mail, and the tiresome wait while the letters are sorted below. Meanwhile, the handing round and devouring of long slips of telegraphic intelligence from England—reports of a terrible *cause*

célèbre, news of the latest political developments, accounts of the bitterest winter known for years—frozen up trains, deaths in snow-drifts, ice floating about the Thames. It is a state of things almost incredible when pictured in that pitiless equatorial glare. Looking back, all seems so oddly familiar and yet so unreal. And somehow the scene on deck, in certain of its features, reminded me then, ever so faintly, of the landing in New York and of the interviewers and the deputations that welcomed my literary colleague, whose letter I am reading. For here is a deputation of pale, thin gentlemen in pith hats and limp clerical collars above black alpaca coats come to welcome a colonial bishop; and there are press reporters likewise, ready to pounce. There are planters in white duck and cummerbunds greeting passenger friends, and native people snatching at one's baggage, and little naked brown children swarming upon the bulwarks, and dealers in rubies and moonstones and carved ivory elephants and such-like, pressing their wares; and a snake charmer piping to his cobra in one place, and, in another, a black conjurer doing the mango trick. . . .

Or it is the harbour of Hong-Kong—with a whole post-bag ready to be delivered—which rises on the shadow-sheet. The blue strip of sea, land-locked by its near, brown bluffs and by the more distant Chinese hills, their cones making a lacework edge against the blue, while the white town rises in terraces to the Peak which bears an odd resemblance to the Hump of Gibraltar. And all manner of craft crowding about the quay—warships, steamers, coal barges, little Chinese sampans, and larger junks with their picturesque ribbed sails.

Or wonderful Nagasaki, and its harbour winding between green hills to the Inland Sea. The rickshaw-scurry to the post office, over an arched bridge spanning a stream where little Japs are bathing. Or now, along open shop-fronts,

where strange figures squat, that seem to have stepped off fans and tea-trays. Now by *Madame Chrysanthème's* Tea House of the Frogs, and past the great flight of steps to the temple, up and down which a crowd of butterflies seem to be flitting. . . . Japanese scenes chase each other. Kioto, the city of topsy-turvy enchantment: the solemn pine glades and gorgeous temples of sacred Nikko: the colossal *Dai Butsu* of Kamakura—Buddha of the Eternal Calm: the snow-cone of Fuji reflected in the waters of a fairy-book lake: pilgrims, geishas, barbaric gateways, surmounted by what look like inverted boats: Shinto priests, in many-coloured vestments; temple dancers; streets of triumphal banners and myriads of firefly lamps. The phantasmagoria becomes grotesque, bewildering. It is somewhat of a relief when Canada is reached, and the sombre Rockies blot out Eastern colour and life. . . . Meanwhile Mr. McCarthy's letters tell their tale of his own doings at home:

73 Eaton Terrace; Nov. 21, '94.

'It is nearly a week since I said "Goodbye" to you, dear Colleague—and I could not realise at the moment as well as I do now that it was a real "Goodbye," and for a very long time. It is strange how at the moment of any serious parting the unimaginative human mind seems unable to realise the full certainty of the fact. Well, well—there's no good in moralizing or reasoning over the peculiarities of the human mind and the human conditions. I hope this letter will find you under blue skies and with a freshening enjoyment of movement and of life. You will have seen the Bay of Biscay, the "Rock," and perhaps will be looking across the lovely bay of Naples to the cone of Vesuvius. What a contrast in scene and atmosphere and everything to the gloomy, half-foggy evening when I left you at Cambridge Terrace and sallied forth into the dull and soulless street!

'The Liberals here are a good deal put out by the result of the election in Forfar. We have been badly beaten in Lord Rosebery's own country, and just after Lord Rosebery had been making speeches there to stir them up to increase

the Liberal majority. It is the first severe blow since Lord Rosebery became Prime Minister. Of course there are local causes and local explanation and all that, but the hard fact remains. People say that Rosebery is not thought to be earnest enough—and also that he lives too much in seclusion and does not get in touch with what is going on. I am sending you a few papers which I hope you will get. I think when I have your next address and when you are settled, I shall always send you the *Westminster Budget* and the *Pall Mall Budget*—they would, between them, tell you practically everything. I gave a sort of lecture, talk rather, to Mrs. Jopling's students and some of their friends at her house on Monday evening—the subject being—what do you think ?—Herodotus !

'I grow to dislike political work more and more. As you know, political work does not merely mean meetings and speeches and the House of Commons. . . .

'You will be glad to hear that I have practically finished my novel—I wrote the last line and the last word yesterday, but it will take a good deal of going over.' [1]

73 Eaton Terrace, Jan. 10, '95.

'I would have written to you before this only I did not know where to write. I should have liked you to find letters from me awaiting you at Brisbane, and it is no fault of mine if you do not receive such a greeting.

'I got your letters from Gibraltar, from Colombo and from Kandy. I almost envy you the delightful scenes you saw at Kandy. . . . I am saving myself up for the Session of Parliament which will open on the fifth of February. I hope I shall be able to get out of the whole business when the present Parliament comes to a close. We live a sort of hermit life. We dined alone on Christmas Day. We don't even go to the theatre. Once in a way, some people come to luncheon with us, and we went to luncheon at Lady Dorothy's last Sunday. I went chiefly because I wanted to talk to her about her brother, Lord Orford, who is dead, and for whom, as you know, I had a great regard. He was one of "The Rebel Rose" party in England, but he led the life of an almost absolute recluse. He was a most charming man—a scholar, a lover of art.

'How far off the time seems to be when we wrote "The

[1] *The Riddle-Ring.*

Rebel Rose" ! I seem to myself to have grown a quarter of a century older since that time. I think I have become old quite suddenly—as if a door had opened and I had passed through and found myself at once in a new and chilling atmosphere. . . .'

73 Eaton Terrace Jan. 16, '95.

'. . . You must find it a relief, mentally and physically, to see all these new and fascinating sights. . . . I met Campbell last night. It was at a farewell dinner given to Beerbohm Tree just before his going to the United States on a theatrical tour. It was strange to see so many familiar faces, which lately I have so seldom seen. You know exactly, without being told, the people who were there. It was my first going out at night for many weeks. . . .'

Jan. 23, '95.

'I wonder where you are now, dear colleague, and what you are doing. Certainly you are under softer and brighter skies than ours for we are having a rough time of it with fogs and miniature blizzards—and to-day a fierce thunderstorm accompanied by a terrible downpour of huge bullet-like hail-stones. I am much better again now despite the hard weather, and am going out again at night and have returned to my regular attendance at the *Daily News*.

'I have been reading in an English translation a very powerful story called "Majesty" by a Dutch author, Couperus. If you come across it, be sure to read it. Also I have been reading a grim story by Gissing called "In the Year of Jubilee" —it deals with Camberwell life. Oh, how well it is done, and how realistic, true and terrible it all is ! The narrowness, meanness, the pitiful, sordid ambitions and failures—what a ghastly satire on all life it is ! It is immensely clever, but I don't see how it ever could be popular.

'I am still hard at work in the writing of pot-boilers —that is to say, leading articles for the *Daily News* and magazine articles for America. I hope soon to begin another novel—for it is of no use attempting to go on with my histories until I have something to live on while they are being written. For they take too long to write, and the return in money, however good it might be, is necessarily slow. The other night I sat at dinner next to Mrs. Roose. . . . Roose is busily engaged just now in hopeless and futile attendance on poor, doomed Lord Randolph Churchill.'

Jan. 30.

'I wonder if you will be interested in the cutting I enclose

containing some memories of mine about poor Lord Randolph Churchill. Nothing in them will be new to you, I fancy, for I must have told them all to you, and many others too, from time to time. I had a great liking for him—and his fate has been doubly tragic, because it was so long protracted after it had become inevitable. Do you remember that we had him a great deal on our minds when we were picturing the parliamentary career of *Rolf Bellarmine* in "The Rebel Rose"?

'I wonder where you are now, and when this will reach you? It seems strange dispatching letter after letter into the air, as one might say. You should have had a larger stock awaiting you if I had had your address earlier. Well, you will arrive some day, and then I shall hear from you and hear all about you. We are having a bitter winter here just now—I hardly think I remember anything quite so disagreeable. I am aweary of the cold and the darkness—were it not for the *Daily News* I don't think I should go out at night at all—until the House meets. That will be Tuesday next. The Government do not feel in good spirits. Their majority has been dwindling, and some of them are growing downhearted and look out for a smash—the worst mood of mind men can get into who have to meet a great crisis. Yet no one can tell you exactly what the great crisis is . . . For myself I only hope there may not be a general election too soon—I want to get time to arrange for my retirement from the leadership, and indeed from Parliament altogether.'

House of Commons, Feb. 6, '95.

'This is not from the Upstairs Lobby, but from the "No" lobby downstairs. You would not easily guess the reason why. The "why" is that there are no fireplaces in the Upstairs Lobby, and that the cold makes it absolutely impossible to write there. I remember nothing of the kind happening before since I first came into Parliament. . . . I shall be deeply interested in knowing what your first impressions are on revisiting your old Australian home. So much in between! I was glad to get your genial wishes for my New Year. I am sometimes in dismal moods and inclined to say with Walter Scott's *Ravenswood* that "nothing in life will ever go well with me again," but I can't go on with him and say that "happiest is the hour that soonest closes it," for I am not quite so lonely as he—besides I have capacity enough for enjoyment of life left in me, if only I were not quite so much harassed with politics, and if Home Rule were

passed, and if I were free to resume my literary work, and the weather were not quite so cold !

'The session opened yesterday, and I was re-elected chairman at the meeting of the party—and I made a speech in the House last night. A speech in the House is now with me a purely perfunctory affair—I have to do it—and I do it as one pays a bill or has a tooth out, but I take no *personal* interest in it and make no effort to excel. The air is full of rumours about a probable defeat of the Ministry—but should such a thing occur, you will know of it in Australia almost as soon as we shall know of it here.'

73 Eaton Terrace, Feb. 16, '95.

'I have got your letter written from "near Adelaide"—and am glad to know that your first big voyage, this time, is nearly over. How prosaic it seems writing from Eaton Terrace to such places as you have visited, and as you propose to visit ! I wonder that you can find time to do so much work with all the excitement of that changing scenery and interest. I am especially anxious to know how you will find your old dwelling-place. As you say, it is just the kind of ghost-like re-visitation that I should enjoy in my dismal kind of way. I wonder if I shall ever travel again ! I seem to have got out of the way of travel now. But it is one comfort in life to know that one can hardly ever tell when some former chapter of existence may not be opened. At present my existence goes on in a dull, mechanical, monotonous sort of way. The two nightmares—day-mares—morning-mares—of my life just now are the bitter weather and the House of Commons. Well, let that pass.'

House of Commons, Feb. 20, '95.

'I launch this letter in the faint hope that it may find you, even though after many days. I should like to travel in Java were it only for the memory of a sweet, sad, touching native ballad which I read ever so many years ago in a translation from one of the stories of the Dutch novelist, Max Havelaar. I wish I could travel there with you—but that, as Byron's *Don Juan* says, "is impossible and cannot be."

'The Government have got over their immediate difficulties and are likely to go on fairly well for the session—but what terribly old news this will be by the time it reaches you ! I have not been out much and have seen few people. . . . I seem to want some new impulse, although I have not the least idea as to where it could possibly come from or what it

could possibly be. Sometimes I ask myself whether I have not really attained to that position which in former days I used to think so enviable—the position of one who looks on life from the Upper Boxes. If so, what could I ask for better than to be allowed to hold that aloof and unconcerned place? Still, I think I might possibly get a new impulse if I were able to get back to literature. Your account of your interviewers carried me back to the Hoffman House, New York.'

'I think I shall chance this letter to Batavia . . . it seems like flinging a letter into mere space when such distances and such uncertainties divide. I shall be delighted when our correspondence comes into regular touch. . . . I do envy you your delightful and wonderful experiences of life. . . . 73 Eaton Terrace, March 2, '95.

'My dear old friend Pigott is dead.[1] He died the other day quite alone. He had long been out of health, and for some time back never went anywhere—and you know how he loved the society of his friends.'

'I am deeply interested in your Brisbane experiences, and I can quite enter into your feelings of strangeness. . . . Here we have winter still. This month of March is a day of almost absolute darkness in London. I have not seen many people about whom you would care to hear.' March 9. '95.

'We are in much agitation now, because the Speaker, Arthur Peel, has announced his almost immediate resignation, and the question is who is to succeed him. Everyone thinks that Courtney is well fitted—admirably fitted on the whole—for the place, but the Tories and some of the extreme Radicals are opposed to him. He is a politician too far advanced for the one set and too reactionary for the other. . . . 73 Eaton Terrace, March 16, '95.

'I have taken up with two new literary projects—neither however involving any particular risk to me. I have agreed to write a one-volume book in a series called "Statesmen of the Day," and my task is to be the life of the Pope. It is, of course, not to be a religious or theological book, but a life of the Pope for all readers. A large circulation is expected. . . . The trouble is that the Pope is a very old man, and the book ought to appear either before his death or immediately after. The other project is one started by our old friends the Seeleys—the publishers of "The Grey River." It is the idea of a series of one-volume novels to be called "Tales of the

[1] The Censor of Plays.

Century "—each to be a genuine novel, but each dealing with some particular time and being, wrought into its conditions and events and atmosphere . . . the idea seems to me a very good one.'

'I am not out of health but I am out of sorts somehow. I can't say with *Macbeth* that I "begin to be aweary of the sun," for up to the present we have no sun here to be aweary of. This is the sixteenth of March, and I am writing this at four in the afternoon by gaslight, because of the fog that enshrouds us. But I am sometimes inclined to say with *Macbeth* that "I wish the estate of the world and all were done"—only in my worst moods, I can't help thinking of the many good fellows of both sexes to whom it is still delightful, and I must not even wish to take from them their bright condition.'

73 Eaton Terrace, March 23, '95.

'I suppose this will reach you some time and somewhere, but I now feel as if I were committing it to the sea itself on the chance of its being washed ashore in your neighbourhood and your seeing it and picking it up. The world, after all, is comparatively small, and yet during five months we have not really got into touch with one another . . . We have actually had already two bright sunny and delightful days—days that make one long for the bank of some brimming river—a real river I mean—not the Thames at the House of Commons, but a river with grassy banks and trees and overhanging branches and all that dear, delightful sort of thing, which I seem to remember having seen somewhere in a dream—or when I was young.'

March 27, '95.

'This is your birthday, dear colleague . . . my memory goes back to a birthday of yours that we spent in Cannes. I remember it well. I do not think I have been abroad anywhere since that time. I am possessed with a desire to go travelling somewhere—anywhere, but I do not see how that longing is possibly to be satisfied . . . We may have another general election soon, which will be another occasion for me to consider the situation and make up my mind as to what I am going to do. Sometimes I feel in a mood to say—let me throw the helve after the hatchet—having given up the best years of my manhood to the Irish National cause, why not throw the worst years after them? What is the use of leaving the field now at this late hour?—And then again comes an almost

distracting longing for leisure—for rest—for being one's own master—the master of one's own life—for the delight of reading—of authorship, for the taking a day's holiday when one felt in need of it—for everything in fact which the present way of life denies me. . . . '

'. . . The other night, at a dinner-party at the House of Commons, I was telling an old story—which you know—about a talk I heard between an English girl and a French girl years ago on one of the Italian lakes. "How many months do you call your London winter?" asked the French girl. "Oh, twelve I suppose," answered the English-woman. When I had finished the story, Blake, the Canadian, who was one of the guests, quietly remarked, "She ought to have said fourteen." ' April 6, '95

'We have just been electing a new Speaker for the House of Commons. Arthur Peel has retired owing to failing health. He has been Speaker for eleven years and was, on the whole, the best I have known in my time. On his farewell day, some of us had to make farewell speeches. Harcourt, Balfour, myself, Chamberlain and Redmond—I give them in order of succession—and I am told that I did very well. I received countless congratulations from Tories as well as Liberals—you know how generous the House is in such matters. Peel himself spoke to me very charmingly about it, and said it touched his very heart. I think its chief merits were its sincerity and its spontaneity. I said exactly what I wanted to say in the best phrases I could think of at that moment, and then I sat down. . . . 73 Eaton Terrace, April 13, '95.

'The new Speaker is a Queen's Counsel named Gully. . . . He has been in the House nine years, but up to the day of his election I had never to my knowledge seen him. He never speaks, but I am told he is a very able lawyer and an advocate, and he has a fine, stately presence and a good clear voice. The Government wanted to have Courtney elected because they believed him to be the best man, as indeed he is, and they would have accepted him although he is one of their strongest political opponents. But the Tories would not have him and wanted to run a man of their own—Sir Matthew White Ridley—and Courtney was too proud to consent to be elected by a small majority—and his own friends and political colleagues, the Unionists, were prepared to sacrifice him to please the Tories. So Courtney stood aside and would not consent

to be nominated. Campbell-Bannerman was willing to take the position—fancy a man with forty-thousand a year willing to submit to the appalling tedium of the Speaker's chair !—but the Government could not spare Bannerman who is one of the strongest men in the Cabinet. Then Frank Lockwood was sounded, but he declined to give up his professional prospects, and so it came to Gully in the end. But how utterly stale this will be by the time it gets to you ! Still I thought it might interest you to know how the end was brought about.'

73 Eaton Terrace, April 20, '95.

'The spring is coming at last, and one feels as if he were beginning to live again. What a pitiful thing it is to be dependent upon weather, especially in a place like London ! But I suppose one cannot help it if one is born that way. You know there is an ancient historical theory that Ireland was settled long ago by a race that came from the South, and who brought with them all the feelings and ways of sunny lands. Well, I am quite inclined to believe that, and it explains why I cannot patiently put up with a chill and drear and darksome climate. *You* seem just now to be getting too much of the sun. So it is that Fate sometimes distributes her gifts a little unthinkingly—sends one to the shade who loves the sun and another to the sun who delights in the shade. If there could only be a little wholesome compromise ! I wonder when you are thinking of returning to London. I hope it will be before the House gets up, so that we may have a few walks on the Terrace. What memories would accompany us along that beaten track down the centre of the walk.'

One of the chapters Mr. McCarthy had talked of writing for 'The Grey River' had been the 'Ghosts of the Terrace' and the memories of political events brooded over by great politicians who had helped to wear the track so distinctly visible upon the pavement. But the ghosts of Westminster Hall had taken its place, and the chapter was never written. None could have done it so well as he, or have made it at once so picturesque and so historically accurate.

The following letter refers to a shipwreck scare off the Australian coast which caused an alteration in my route of travel. The projected Java expedition never came off,

and those letters of recommendation from The Hague, procured through the courtesy of Sir Edward Grey, served no purpose after all. A disaster happened to the vessel in which we started upon the Torres Straits route—she was of that Eastern and Australasian line, to which the ill-fated *Quetta*, wrecked off the Australian coast with almost every soul on board, had belonged. Oddly enough, we had been talking of that shipwreck just before our own attempt at shipwreck occurred. Only an attempt at shipwreck! But I know now what it means to hear the sudden crash of a ship striking and the call of the captain from above, 'All women and children on deck in life-belts'; and I shall not easily forget the wait on deck for some fifteen minutes in the darkling evening watching an ineffectual attempt to launch a life-boat and expecting every minute to find ourselves in the water. The ship did not go down, however, the damage was less than had at first been supposed, and next day we were ignominiously towed into port. Fright and the delay involved in keeping to the original route made me decide upon the P. and O. course instead; but I have ever since regretted that lost sight of Java.

Mr. McCarthy's congratulations on our escape reached me in Japan:

73 Eaton Terrace, April 27, '95.

'I have just got your letter—and I read it with a positive breathless interest. It was so near coming to a regular shipwreck—and in such phantom-haunted waters! . . . I think it is better than monotony after all. But perhaps I only say this because at present I suffer somewhat from monotony myself. No doubt we are all inclined to think that what we are going through is more trying than what anybody else is going through. I should just now much like a little shipwreck or two, I think. . . . I am going to-night to a dinner of the Press Club, where I am to make a speech in reply to the toast of the House of Commons. Alfred Lambart is coming with me, and also young Blake—son of my parliamentary

colleague—a very tall, slender, handsome youth, who burns to be introduced into the society of authors and journalists. Alas, we were all like that once—I mean as regards our longing for the society of authors and journalists—and now behold ! . . .

' . . . The Government is struggling hard—many people say of Sir William Harcourt what people, as you remember, once said of *Sandham Morse*,[1] that he is riding for a fall. The Government majority is very small, and the Parnellite nine generally vote against them. Yet I do not for myself believe that an election is quite close at hand. You will know of it probably before this reaches you. I am thinking of going down to Brighton at the close of next week to stay with the Horne Paynes. It would be a decided relief to get a breath of the sea. I went to two political meetings in Surrey last week—in delightful old places which made one long to settle down there and never come back to London again. But I suppose it would not turn out very well with one—I suppose I should miss London life. But I don't know. There are moods in which I seem to be thoroughly sick of London—to feel the whole conditions and atmosphere of the place as one feels a nightmare.'

73 Eaton Terrace, May 7, '95.

' What a wonderful time of travel you are having ! I consider myself quite an adventurous sort of person because I boldly broke away from London from the Saturday of last week to the Monday in this, and sought refuge in Brighton ; and you meanwhile are exchanging Australia for China and Japan, and I know not where else. Until the rush down to Brighton, I had not been out of London a whole day for more than six months. . . .

' Poor old Sir Robert Peel is dead. I knew him well at one time and liked him much. He started with brilliant gifts—among others a voice as fine as that of his father—and with splendid parliamentary promise.

' You don't tell me anything about yourself—I mean about how you feel and what you think of. I suppose, in point of fact, you have been passing through so many new experiences and strange scenes that you have not much time for considering.—But if ever you should have a chance of retrospection and feel inclined to encourage it, then tell me something about yourself. I have really nothing to tell except that political

[1] A character in *The Right Honourable*.

business grows more and more pressing. So runs the world away. The other day in Brighton we were taken to see the very house where Parnell lived—at the very extreme—the Land's End so to speak of that stretch of Brighton—the very last house in the town on that seaside. My mind became filled with all sorts of memories as I looked on it. It is a large, gaunt, and mournful-looking house.'

'I launch this for Tokio on speculation.

73 Eaton Terrace, May 25, '95.

'. . . To-day is the Queen's birthday, and among the list of royal honours conferred, appear the names of Henry Irving, Walter Besant, and William Howard Russell as Knights. I cannot say that I feel very enthusiastic at these honours paid to literature and art—by the way Lewis Morris is also made a Knight. But there are several Baronets, including B——, an excellent fellow in every way and a very good friend of my own. But then is it much of an honour to letters and art to make Irving and William Russell and Besant, Knights and to make B—— a Baronet? Of course one knows the reason for this difference. B—— is a man of immense fortune—Irving has in that sense no money at all. B—— can provide for a posterity of Baronets—Irving cannot. Still, would it not be better to let the honours to letters and art alone altogether than to distribute them in this fashion? Or why not found an order especially and exclusively for letters and art, with a classification of its own like the colonial order?[1] My own feeling would be in favour of letting the whole thing alone and leaving literature and art to find out and name and crown their own successes. But if this is not to be, then I certainly do not think that letters and art are flattered by an arrangement which makes Irving and Russell and Besant, Knights and at the same moment makes several successful manufacturers Baronets!'

'I send this to Yokohama, and hope it will get at you there. I have been out of London for three or four days—down in Leeds attending the annual Convention of the Irish National League of Great Britain—that is of the Irishmen living in England, Scotland and Wales. We had no end of meetings and dinners and our sitting-room was always crowded by the local men. You know the sort of thing. Politically it was a great success, but I do not propose to discuss politics to you just

June 4, '95.

[1] This seems prophetic of the Order of Merit.

at this moment. . . . I have just heard of three deaths which make me stop and think. One is that of your old friend Mr. Bentley—whom I associate with you and our early literary comradeship—the second is that of Frederick Locker,[1] the poet, whom I knew very well at one time—and the third is that of Emily Faithfull whom also at one time—now growing a rather distant time—I knew very well. I heard of the three deaths together. . . .

'I have been reading a marvellously clever novel of Dutch life in Borneo, by a man who signs himself Joseph Conrad. It was sent me by Fisher Unwin who asked my opinion of it, which I gave him in words of downright enthusiasm and I have got to-day a very nice letter from the author in acknowledgement. It is called "Almayer's Folly." I wish you would get hold of it before you leave the region of the tropics.'

House of Commons, June 20, '95.

'I pelt you with this little letter on chance as if I were throwing a flower to you which might hit or miss. Please do not think that I fancy it is worthy to be likened to a flower, but I throw it in the same sort of way. I send it to Yokohama on the chance that it may yet reach you there. . . . You must have had a wonderful time of it—a "dream-time." And we have been so dull and prosaic here! Every day is like another—only duller. I am rather worn out and somewhat out of health, and the incessant sedentary life does not agree with me. . . . I was sorry to see the announcement of the death of poor De Fonblanque, your old friend. I liked him much, but I associate him wholly with your house. . . .'

June 28, '95.

'I have received your letter from Kioto, and the 28th of June is an appropriate day to write to you. Our literary compact was made on the 28th of June a good many years ago. . . . I am glad to hear that you enjoy Japan so much—and how I do wish that I could be borne out there by some magician's craft and taken away from the turmoil which is about to set in here! For, in a few days, we shall be in the full swing and passion of a general election. All this you will have heard of course long before this letter reaches you, and so I mean only to tell you of my own part in the business. I have consented to go through this election on the express understanding with my colleagues that I am to be perfectly free when the new Parliament has got into working order to resign

[1] Frederick Locker-Lampson.

my seat at any time I may think fit. If I were to refuse to stand at this coming election while there is so much discord in the party and depression outside it, the inevitable result would be to make people believe that I had found the whole movement hopeless and ruined—and thus to damage terribly the chances of the Irish and even of the English Liberal elections. So I have consented to stand on the conditions I have told you—and to those conditions I propose to hold. I am utterly weary of political and public life—and indeed I fancy that I should take a much quicker interest in the movement of any great political cause if I were absolutely free from the insufferable drudgery of public life. Of course the internal dissensions and hatreds and jealousies among our party make the situation all but unbearable for me.

'How far removed you are from all this! You must survey it as if you were looking on from another planet. . . .'

73, Eaton Terrace, July 17, '95.

'We are in the throes of a general election—and the Liberals are being routed, horse, foot and artillery. So far, I can see a wave of Conservative reactionism is sweeping over England—not over Scotland and Wales but over England only. However, you will have learned the result of this from the papers and telegrams long before this letter could reach you, and so I shall only talk of my own personal experiences, whereof the papers and telegrams will not greatly concern themselves. I have just come back from Dublin—I have been backwards and forwards six times in one fortnight—and I have made it known that a word or a telegram will bring me back again. I stay in Dublin at the good old "Shelbourne" from which I have in days of a similar storm and stress written to you many times. We sit in committee all day and every day. We have a short adjournment for luncheon and dinner and we go on until after midnight—arranging for local contests and candidates and all that sort of thing. We sit in the same way on Sundays; we do not have, like Betsy Jane, our Sunday out. It is fearfully tiresome work—all drudgery and detail. I have been re-elected without opposition for North Longford, my old place, though I announced that I would not go to speak at that or any other contest. I am beginning to be sick of the quarrels among ourselves, and they have done us immense—I might almost say incurable—injury among the

English electorates. Anyhow, I shall only hold my seat for a short and convenient time. It is quite understood among my committee that this is to be so, and we only debate upon what is to be done next. So far I have distinctly gained upon my position when I saw you last. I want to get back to my old work and to quiet and to live a little again in literature and to see a river now and then and to go gently and not unhappily down the inevitable descent. On the 22nd of November I shall be sixty-five ! ! ! The time has clearly come for making up one's mind. It is supremely idle to argue with the inexorable.

'I am sending this to Vancouver City on the chance of finding you on your homeward way. I shall chance again at New York, unless I hear from you of any intermediate stage. Your telling me that I shall have a chance of seeing you some time in August is very delightful. I have not seen any of our old acquaintances for a long time. A great wave seems to have arisen and floated me away from all of them. Since you left London, I have hardly met anyone with whom you and I were both acquainted. I was in a train on the Underground one Sunday two or three weeks ago and I got next a clergyman of the English Church and a graceful looking lady who were talking about the collaboration of Mr. Thomas Hardy and Mrs. Henniker—Lord Houghton's sister and a very charming woman—in some story.

'The lady said: "I thought these collaborations were never successful." The clergyman replied—all unconscious of my identity—"Oh well, I don't know—I believe the collaboration of Justin McCarthy and Mrs. Campbell Praed brought out some very good work ! . . ." I began this in Dublin.'

73, Eaton Terrace, July 19, '95.

'I have just received your letter written on board the *Empress of China*—and the Canadian stamp on its envelope promises your return home—and I expect to see you here before long, looking younger, not older—you say you have suddenly grown old. . . . But that perhaps in your case is the mood of a season. In mine it is one of the set conditions of advancing years. . . .

'I wonder when you will be back in London and where you will settle down. . . . When I think what little children yours were when I first knew them, I seem suddenly taken aback by

the stern sense of the passing of time and the inexorable changes it makes, while yet, to oneself, the world, externally, seems the same. . . . I am full of regret about some of my friends who have just gone under in the political battle and have lost their places in the House of Commons. . . . The defeat of the Liberals so far is crushing. We are in, I suppose, for six years of Tory Government.'

CHAPTER XXV

CLOSING THE POLITICAL CHAPTER

August 1895 found me again in England ; and Mr. McCarthy writes on my arrival :

73, Eaton Terrace, Aug. 2, '95.

'Welcome home, dearest Colleague ! Of course I quite understand that you could not possibly find time to see me just at the moment, having so many things on your hands. I had heard about Campbell's accident and the danger he was in for a time, but I did not like to say anything to you. I am afraid you did not get all my letters. I wrote some to Vancouver and others, later on, to New York under the impression that even if you travelled through Canada, you would make for New York. But it does not much matter now—for I shall see you soon and can tell you all I wrote. I have come to something like a crisis in my fortunes—political I mean—and I do not think I can go much further on. I will tell you all about it when we meet.'

Aug. 6, '95.

'I have been so fearfully busy that I have not had time to write anything like a letter. We are hard at work in preparing for the opening of the Session which will be on Monday next. . . . I am issuing a manifesto to the Irish people to-morrow against the dissensions which have been spread in our ranks. I am giving frank intimation that if I am not accorded full authority to enforce order, I shall give up the chairmanship. In any case it is quite understood among my own friends that I am not to be expected to come back to the Session which meets with the early weeks of next year. But that fact is kept a secret just yet. So you see that my political career is coming fast to an end. That long and

stirring and often painful chapter of my life's romance is nearly closed. There is always something serious about the actual closing of any life-chapter. I have closed more than one.

'How is Campbell making progress? I do hope he will soon be all right again. . . . Tell me of your movements and plans when you get time. I know that you are distracted with many troubles and occupations, and I wonder when I may hope to see you.'

'Yes, that was a thunderstorm . . . not unworthy perhaps of your tropical experiences. It did not however do me any particular harm. I took what shelter I could in a very shallow doorway until at last a welcome cab came by within call. I enjoyed very much that first evening spent with you after your return home. I am writing this, as I have written to you more than once before, from our Committee Room Number 15. I think we are in for a long and stormy meeting —but the fierce winds have not yet begun to blow. . . .' House of Commons, Aug. 13, '95.

'I still feel shaky and queer, and an unbroken sitting of twelve hours—what with party meetings and the business of the House itself, in a single day—rather bowls me over. We are still full of internal quarrels. I find it hard to say which is more in the right and which is more in the wrong. The work of the party is spoilt and indeed poisoned by hatreds. I begin to find that all the things we men commonly say and have been saying about you women—about your jealousies and your rivalries and your spites and your spleens and your hatreds, might just as well be said by you women about us men. Honestly, I do not see any difference. . . .' Aug. 19, '95.

'I am enjoying my holiday. I love its wholesome and restful monotony. We sail a great deal—in a little hired boat, and I sometimes feel brought back to my boyish, seaport days when to be on the water was part of one's daily life.' Herne Bay, Sept. 19, '95.

'I have not received a political letter for several days!! Think what a relief that is! I shall give up the leadership of the party before Parliament reassembles. I shall have to consult the convenience of my constituents as regards the giving up of the seat, but that would make little matter, for the time would not be long in any case, and I should only have to attend important divisions. The work, the incessant consultations and conferences, the correspondence and the Sept. '95.

responsibilities which the chairmanship brings with it—those are the troubles which I can bear no longer. I shall go back with a long deep sigh of relief to my literary work.'

Herne Bay, Sept. 26, '95.

'I would have answered your letter before this, but that, oddly enough in this lovely weather, I had a sharp attack of illness for two days. I am all right again now, but weak still. I am so glad you were able to go to the Lyceum. I saw Forbes Robertson as *Romeo* years ago and thought it a poetic and beautiful performance.

'I am engaged to give a few lectures in provincial cities during the autumn and winter. The pay is pitiful as compared with the States, but the travel is easy, and I am anxious to test myself and see whether I can still do the work. . . . I have just received the enclosed[1] (returned to me by the post-office in New York) and send it on to its rightful owner. Happily it contained no tremendous political secrets which might have been revealed to the minions of a despotic Tory Government!'

73, Eaton Terrace, Nov. 9, '95.

'I am glad to hear that your condition is improving. I shall send you some books to-morrow—chosen on chance—and if they do not suit, you can have others. I am very hard at work of late, for I am striving to get my book on the Pope done before Leo's death, which at his advanced age—eighty six—may be expected at any day—and the book is not half done yet. . . . The quantity of work I am pledged to do between this time and the end of December is something that occasionally makes me "start from sleep o'nights" as the Elizabethan authors would have said. And I have to do it—to keep the pot boiling. We are full of troubles in our political party—but I shall not inflict them upon you *now*.'

73, Eaton Terrace, Feb. 5, '96.

'I am going over to Dublin to-morrow for a few days to attend some meetings and to give in my formal resignation of the Chairmanship. The fact has already got into all the papers, and columns have been written about it. On the whole, the tone of even the Conservative press was considerate and kindly. I have just now sent to the newspapers in general my formal farewell address. I propose however still to keep my seat in the House of Commons.

'My interview with Balfour was sought at the suggestion of a friend of his and of mine. The idea was that I should

[1] A letter sent to me in America and returned through the post office.

put before him what I knew about the Irish in America and try to impress him with the fact that troubles between England and the United States will always be impending until the Irish Question is settled—and also that the vast majority of the Irish Americans would be absolutely satisfied with a Home Rule settlement, and do not think in the least about separation. He listened with great interest and asked many questions. Of course he could not promise anything, but on the whole I thought the interview satisfactory. . . .

'Yes—I remember the "Gone is gone, and dead is dead!"[1] I have thought of it many times lately. . . . I feel so outworn and old. . . . Perhaps when the burden and strain of the chairmanship is over I may pluck up spirit again: just now I feel very low down.'

'I have got your letter of the fifth. . . . Yes, it is five years and a little more since I became leader of the Irish Party—I knew you would feel glad to hear that I was getting out of the trouble, but I had not a chance lately of talking over that or anything else with you. I did not go to Ireland after all. I had a bad cold and felt weak and my doctor would not let me make the double journey at such a time of year. I have been receiving wild telegrams from Davitt, Dillon and William O'Brien imploring me to go. But I cannot after the advice I have received—and I really cannot imagine any particular good that my presence can do. All my friends know that I must adhere to my resolve. Feb. 7, '96.

'If Sexton would accept the position he would in all probability be unanimously elected—but I think will probably refuse. In that case I see nothing to do but to use our majority and elect John Dillon. He is absolutely single-minded and devoted to the national cause. He has a home in Ireland, and he has not to make a living.

'I shall turn back to literature, for my attendance at the House of Commons will not have to be incessant, and shall try as you say, to do some good work. The *Daily News* has changed its editor. The new man who comes in on Monday is Mr. E. T. Cook who used to edit the *Westminster Gazette*.'

[1] The quotation is from Jean Paul Richter's *Fruit, Flower, and Thorn Pieces*—a book to which Mr. McCarthy introduced me, and of which he was very fond.

For me, the scene changes again to Cannes, and, as of old, Mr. McCarthy's letters keep me informed of 'the world of men,' though for him that world has become more circumscribed than of yore, when, in the heat and turmoil of political conflict, he had written from the battle-field.

73, Eaton Terrace, Feb. 15, '96.

'I am delighted to get your letter and to know that your life in Cannes is pleasant to you. I have been a prisoner in the house for several days. My doctor will not allow me to stay late in the House of Commons for some time yet and I very willingly obey his orders. . . . I shall not be a very regular attendant at the House this Session. . . . My sudden announcement came about this way. I wished to make it public long ago, but was dissuaded by Dillon and Davitt who thought it would be better to hold it over until the eve of the Session in order to avoid agitation and intrigue. In the meantime T. P. O'Connor, as a member of the Committee, naturally got to know of my intention and suddenly announced in his paper that with the coming week, I should cease to be the leader of the party. It was no use delaying then, so I at once published my farewell address. I feel greatly relieved, I shall finish my life of the Pope in a day or two—then I have to write a short story—and then I mean to begin my Memoirs at once. Chatto is very hopeful about them. After that, the Histories. . . . It would be a fitting thing that we should write that sequel to "The Right Honourable." '

House of Commons, March 3, '96.

'. . . I have got a year's work quite cut out for me before I can even touch the concluding volume of the "History of Our Own Times" and the two volumes of the "Georges." But in the meantime I must say that the literary prospects are good, and I am inundated with invitations to do this, that and the other thing. I am not certain how I shall get on with the *Daily News* with its new editor. It has somewhat changed its political point of view. . . .'

March 6, '96.

'I hasten to send you an answer to what I may call the business part of your letter.[1] I have made enquiries of two former Under Secretaries for Foreign Affairs and one former Under Secretary for Colonial Affairs. The results come to

[1] Information concerning certain foreign and colonial appointments, which I had asked him to get for me in view of a book I was then writing.

this. Anyone may be made a Governor of a colony with or without qualification. But then, in most cases, the Governorship is not a highly paying affair because of the expenses of entertaining people. As to consulship, anybody may still be made a consul at any of the nearer places. Such an appointment in China or Japan or Persia is almost impossible unless the man speaks the native language. In nearer places, it is not as common as it was to appoint a complete outsider, but it can be done and is done—only the candidate has to pass through a very easy and formal civil examination—civil service examination—whereas, formerly, candidates were simply named by the Foreign Secretary without any test whatever. Therefore you might give your personage any consulship you thought fit, so far as Europe and the nearer East were concerned—Egypt, Syria and that sort of thing—but not the farther East, unless you make it part of your scheme that your friend speaks those farther Eastern languages. I think you may rely on this. Oh, how I should love to go out to Cannes and have a genuine rest there! But it can't be done, just at present—for the books I have to work at for some coming time would require a library carted along with me. . . .'

'. . . Yes, I was very much wondering what had become of you. But my forebodings set your silence down to illness —in which unhappily my forebodings were all too true. . . . For me, "the time has come when all is retrospect." This is a phrase I once heard Cobden use and it made a deep impression on me. "The time when all is retrospect" . . . .' March 24, '96.

'I have just been reading "Mrs. Tregaskiss."[1] . . . I was much pleased by the allusion to my "Dream-heroines."[2] May 8, '96.

[1] A novel of mine published by Messrs. Chatto & Windus.

[2] *Three Dream-Heroines* is the title of a sweet, fantastic article which I do not think has ever been published outside the pages of *Scribner's Magazine*, in which it appeared, but which is to my mind the most beautiful and touching thing Mr. McCarthy ever wrote. I remember his telling me of how the thought came to him one dreary, windy day at Margate when he was walking alone by the sea—the thought of those three dream-heroines who usually make up the sum of a man's life. *Fair Ines*, the visionary embodiment of all his youthful romance. *Fair Ines* who went—

'. . . into the West
To dazzle when the sun is down
And rob the world of rest':

and *Sally in our Alley*, the dear workaday companion: and *Annabel Lee*, the dead bride, whose place in her husband's heart no other woman can ever fill.

I am fond of dream heroines, though of late my dreams seem fading and vague somehow. I am working very hard at my Gladstone and some shorter things. . . . I went to Richmond yesterday to see my dear old friend Lady Russell. I went chiefly for the purpose of introducing my friend and colleague Edward Blake who wished to know her and whom she wished to know. She is full of the keenest interest in life and in everything that concerns the welfare of human beings, and she is as staunch a Home Ruler as ever. She is, I suppose, nearly twenty years older than I am, yet she does not seem to me in the least outworn in spirit or feeling or cordial human interest as I begin to fear I am becoming. . . .

May '96. '. . . I was down to-day to luncheon with the Charles Beresfords at their lovely place on Ham Common. The weather was beautiful—the drive through Richmond delightful—the roads and the hedges and the Park all in the glory of spring colours—the party was large and bright—the host and hostess ever so pleasant and—well—I was glad when it was over and I was back to my typewriter again. It used not to be so when we made our little excursions and expeditions in America. . . . Many things have changed since those days, but one thing is quite unalterable and that is our true and tender friendship.'

May '96. 'I was in the House of Commons to-night. I find it a great relief to be no longer leader of the Irish Party. I have made an agreement with an American publisher to write a "Story of Mr. Gladstone's Life" which is to pass through a serial and then come out in book form. It will be only one volume—about the size of my book on the Pope. Of course I shall have to put off my personal reminiscences, for Gladstone's life cannot last very long. By the way, Gladstone wrote a most delightful letter to the Secretary of the St. Patrick's dinner—got up this time in honour of me—in which he spoke of me in words of praise which made me feel that I had not lived in vain. Since it has come to retrospect, there is something for retrospect to feed upon. . . .'

May 26, '96. 'I wish I could share your delights in Venice. I adore Venice; Rome and it are my two delights in Italy. Yes, I have read Ruskin all through—though not lately—not for several years—but I love all that he says about Venice and the pictures and the place. For myself I have never been more

impressed by the influence of genius than when studying Titian's "Assumption"—in the Palace of Fine Arts on the canal. Ten years and more must have passed away. I should love to renew my impressions of it, and I well know that I should not be disappointed: one never can grow too old for Venice. But I suppose I shall never travel again—not because I am too old, but for other reasons that will readily present themselves to your mind. I am working pretty constantly, but life is a little monotonous just now. There is no one in town with whom I could exchange two ideas. I have not had a real conversation for I don't know how long.'

'You will like Lugano, I am sure. I don't myself much care about Milan except for the cathedral—and even that, I don't love as I do St. Mark's in Venice—and the decaying "Last Supper." May 29, '96.

'I shall give you the book on the Pope on the 28th of June. I have had a very charming letter from Gladstone about the book—full of admiration for the Pope and of interest in the Irish Cause and of kindly feeling about myself. . . . I also received very kindly letters from Cardinal Vaughan and the Duke of Norfolk about the book.

'I am working hard at my "Life of Gladstone." Yet I cannot throw my whole soul into it. I cannot throw my whole soul into any book which is simply "ordered" of me—which is in fact a mere pot-boiler. But if the garrison is to hold out there must be something in the pot to boil—and so I shall do the best I can. But oh! how easy it would be, as Becky Sharp says, to be virtuous on five thousand a year!'

'The weather is intensely and wonderfully hot here, and although I used always to revel in heat, this time it has overthrown me. I can do little but lie on a bed or on a sofa—to-day I have not left the house for all the temptation of the lovely sunlight, and I have sent a wire to Dr. Hale asking him to come and see me. I never before felt in such a condition of absolute physical weakness and I naturally don't know what to make of it.' June 15, '96.

'I am decidedly better and in fact am coming all right again. I have been very little in the House of Commons of late. . . . I can never again give regular service or anything like regular service to the House of Commons. . . . June 28, '96.

'I have read one of the books you tell me of—Harold Frederic's "Illumination" and I think it immensely clever and terribly depressing. It is a wonderful picture of a narrow, restricted, gloomy sort of life. The other novel I shall certainly get and read. I met Harold Frederic the other night for the first time during many months—of course, we are very old acquaintances. I met him at a dinner given by Ortmans, the Editor of *Cosmopolis* to the contributors—I have just written an article for it. The Editor is a very clever fellow—a German, quite a young man who talks English as well as anyone could do. My friend Frederic was quite apologetic about some articles he had written to a New York paper, in which it seems he had attacked Dillon and myself and others on political grounds—and he begged to assure me that the attacks were merely political and not at all personal. I am afraid I disappointed him when I told him with perfect truth that I had never read the articles, had never heard of them, and should not have been troubled in the least by anything they could have said about me. The dinner was very interesting—as I told a Member of the German Parliament—Dr. Barth—who was there, every man in the room had a name. I had a pleasant dinner with the Cobden Club last evening at Greenwich. We went down in a steamer from the Speaker's stairs and were brought back in the same way. So you will see that I am really getting stronger. This is the 28th of June and I have been writing your name in a copy of my sketch of the Pope. . . .

'I have been working pretty hard at my "Gladstone Life" and it is positively drawing to a finish. . . . I was only bound to send in the first half by September, and I now hope to send the whole thing complete long before September. . . . I am writing little or nothing for the *Daily News* and have been putting all my energy into the "Gladstone" which is by far the most important work I can do at the present. Just now as I am getting better and stronger I feel as if I could do almost anything. The exaggerated accounts of my illness in some of the papers brought me a number of kindly letters. . . .'

73, Eaton Terrace, Aug. 25, '96.

'We returned to town last night, and I received your very welcome letter. I am selfishly glad that you are going to be soon settled in town again.

'We spent a month at Blackpool doing nothing, or next to nothing but idling on the lawn or walking or driving along the roads. Anthony Hope Hawkins spent a fortnight with us and was a very charming companion. . . .

'I have to go to Dublin on Friday. . . . We shall only be there for a few days. I shall have to work hard to get my fifth volume of "The History of Our Own Times" done for the middle of the Jubilee Year. Do you know that next month it will be ten years since you and Campbell and I left Liverpool for New York?'

'I am in town again—and am not likely to leave it again for some time. I had a week in Dublin—politically very satisfactory and hopeful but physically very wearying—to me at least. The night journeys to and from Dublin and the long sittings at the Convention every day were rather too much for me. It is not likely that I shall again attend a political gathering in Dublin. Not that I am at all in bad health. On the contrary, I feel in excellent condition, and the four weeks of absolute quiet at breezy Blackpool did me an immensity of good. But I have now *four* books—no less![1]—to be completed as quickly as possible—and I do not feel that I could be of much active service to Irish politics any more. Sept. 6, '96.

'Let me hear from you as soon as you can—I am assuming that you are still at Hampstead. Tell me what you are doing and when you are to be settled in your new house—and we might arrange for a meeting soon.'

[1] In my knowledge of Mr. McCarthy, he had never before been seriously anxious about money. He had always made a considerable income until ill-health and the forced sale of his copyrights to meet his innocently incurred debt in regard of the Irish Exhibition, worried and hampered him.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE VEILED VISITANT

Mr. McCarthy writes to me, once more, at Cannes:

73, Eaton Terrace, March 17, '97.

'I am very sorry that you have to lie in bed while the lovely spring of the Riviera is around you. Still, you are far better lying in your bed where you can get the breath of the sea and its sunlight through your windows than if you were lying here where we have hardly anything but squally winds and downpouring rains. I wish I could be at Cannes too. . . . But alack and alas! I cannot—for I have to finish my fifth volume of the "History of Our Own Times" up to date, and to me everything depends now on the timely conclusion of the volume. I have been for the most part miserably unwell during the long winter which, though it has not been a severe winter as London winters go, yet has been very long and dark and rainy and misty, and is now apparently setting forth on a new chapter. So I have been compelled to have—not the Angel in the House, but—the doctor in the house all the time. My medical friend is very cheery, and says there is nothing alarming in my condition, but that I am one of the rather numerous class, who cannot do well in London during a long winter. But I can't get out of London just now—I am "tied to the stake," as *Macbeth* says. "I cannot fly, but, bear-like, I must fight the course." So there's an end.

'Have you read Mrs. Steel's book "On the Face of the Waters." I wonder if I asked you about it before? It is not by my old friend Mrs. Steele, but quite another woman. It is a novel about the Indian Mutiny, in which she had experiences when a child, and it is really, in its way, a masterpiece. Do get it and read it, and tell me what you think about it. Charlotte and I met her for the first time at a dinner-party last Sunday. She is a charming woman.'

I came back to England in the late spring, but did not see him for some time, being ill and in trouble myself. He writes to me in the June of 1897 :

' I don't know whether you are well or ill. . . . If I could have written to you, I would have done so long ago, but I simply couldn't. I have been in miserable health—and to add to my troubles have had an accident to my right hand which for many weeks made writing or typewriting impossible. Even now I can write only a few lines. I am very unwell, but I want to hear from you. This day I have first tried writing since I became ill, and I find that I can't do it yet.'

That was a dark chapter in Justin McCarthy's life. He was worn out with overwork and anxiety. He had just finished the fifth volume of ' The History of Our Own Times ' when he broke down. They gave him then the last rites of his Church. But he got better, though for the rest of his life he was forced to lead more or less the existence of an invalid.

I have a vivid recollection of my first visit to him after that illness. He was very feeble and was lying on the sofa in his study where there were many flowers his friends had brought him. He told me that for several days, when at the worst, he had been quite unconscious of himself and that somehow he had got Greece into his mind. He had had the fancy that England had annexed Greece and that he was in Athens, fighting for its independence.

And then he went on talking to me very sadly of his life. He told me that it could never be the same again ; that with the nearness of death so much seemed to have been swept away from him. . . . He spoke of the failure of the Irish Cause—of how he had given up the twenty best years of his life for it, of how, having gone into it at the zenith of his popularity, he was now retiring from it, a wreck in body and fortune. He talked of the great mistakes he had made in his life—of which the greatest, he said, had been the giving

up of America, and he told me again of how he had gone over to America after his editorship of the *Morning Star*, and had soon found that instead of having to work tremendously hard for a moderate income, he could make there an ever so much greater income with less work. He said that he ought to have become a naturalised citizen of the United States, and that Sumner had assured him he would in such case have certainly been chosen as Minister to the Court of St. James. Many times I had heard him speak with regretful longing of that position or its equivalent at Washington as the one which would be most congenial to him. He had left America, he said, because his wife had wished it.

Afterwards, his next great mistake had been, he said, the giving up of his literary career for the House of Commons. He told me how the romantic patriotism of his youth had been stirred afresh at the idea of working for the National Cause, and dwelt mournfully upon the fatality of that cause which had wrecked so many brave spirits.

From that we drifted to literary talk. He got on to Plato and to Xenophon in reply to some question I asked him about *The Banquet*: and again he spoke so tenderly of ancient Greece that I said to him half laughingly:

'I am sure that in some former incarnation you must have been Greek.'

In old days, he would have smiled whimsically at the notion, for he had never shown any great sympathy with occultism; and it surprised me to hear him answer quite seriously and with earnest feeling, 'Yes, I was Greek.'

He quoted from a translation of Béranger's poem, 'Le Voyage Imaginaire,' which had been made by his friend William Doe, and then he made me take down from its shelf his small well-worn copy of Béranger, and we read the poem in the original, he repeating aloud the fervid cry as it runs:

. . . . . .

Arrachez-moi des fanges de Lutèce :
Sous un beau ciel mes yeux devaient s'ouvrir.
Tout jeune aussi, je rêvais à la Grêce :
C'est là, c'est là que je voudrais mourir.

En vain faut-il qu'on me traduise Homère :
Oui, je fus Grec : Pythagore a raison.
Sous Périclès j'eus Athènes pour mère :
Je visitai Socrate en sa prison.
De Phidias j'encensai les merveilles :
De l'Ilissus j'ai vu les bords fleurir
J'ai sur l'Hymette éveillé les abeilles :
C'est là, c'est là que je voudrais mourir.'

Daignez au port accueillir un barbare,
Vierge d'Athène : encouragez ma voix.
Pour vos climats je quitte un ciel avare
Où le génie est l'esclave des rois.
Sauvez ma lyre, elle est persécutée :
Et, si mes chants pouvaient vous attendrir,
Mêlez ma cendre aux cendres de Tyrtée :
Sous ce beau ciel je suis venu mourir.'

[1] The following is the translation which Mr. McCarthy quoted :

'Oh snatch me from Lutetia, dark and filthy,
Mine eyes look longing for a purer sky ;
I dreamed of Greece when glowing, young and healthy :
'Tis there : 'tis there that I would wish to die.

'What need they to translate the songs of Homer ?
Yes, I was Greek ! Pythagoras says well ;
With Pericles I loved my mother Athens,
Socrates saw me in his prison cell.
I've bent in awe to gods that Phidias set us ;
Heard at my feet, Ilissus murmuring by,
I've waked the bees on flower-bestrewn Hymettus :
'Tis there : 'tis there that I would wish to die.

'Oh deign to lend your hand unto the stranger,
Virgin of Athens ! listen while he sings.
I come from a dark land where death and danger
Track the free heart, and genius stoops to kings.
Protect my lyre ! Here, free words ne'er betray us,
And if my song should moist your gentle eye,
Give the same urn to me that holds Tyrtaeus,
Beneath your glorious sky, I come to die.'

From this he talked on as he had often talked to me before about the peculiar affinity he always felt with Greece. I knew that it had been his habit on coming back in the night hours from the House or the office of the *Daily News* always to read before going to bed for a short time from some classic author. He described with what ease he had learned Greek as a lad, though, owing to the Catholic disabilities in those days in Ireland, he had been unable to go to college and pursue his studies there. He loved the literature of Greece; and he told me now that when in his travels just before I first knew him, he had gone into the Piræus he felt that he *knew* the place and had seemed to realise that he had once walked on the Acropolis. It was very curious and interesting to listen to him.

I reminded him of his having once told me of a vivid dream he had had, in which he was a Greek and had wrestled in a sort of strange epic combat. The dream, he said, had impressed him so much and had been so real that he had wished to write it, but the subject—of a kind of classic naturalism—would not, he said, do nowadays.

His dreams were almost the only mystic touch about him. Several of his short stories—one in particular which I have read, called ' A Fellow's Love-Story,' he told me he had dreamed from beginning to end, verbatim.

I am haunted by each little detail of that meeting—by the sense I had of tragedy in that spent life—as it then seemed to me: the pathos of that futile waste of high gifts and noble aspiration. But have we any right to think that these were wasted? Is there not a storehouse to which all such gifts return and flow back again to enrich the world?

Yet the sorrow of it oppresses me—I took the sorrow and the oppression away with me—the ring of emotion in that weakened voice when he spoke of Ireland, of Parnell, of the Cause: the picture of him as he leaned against the cushions of the sofa; his books all around him, the flowers upon his

table, and always the feeling of the Veiled Visitant hovering near—though it was to be long still before the last darkness should fall.

His doctors scarcely thought then that he could recover. That in a measure he regained his strength and was still able to pursue his literary labours—for since that time he has written much and well—is due to the devoted care of his daughter, who during the downward years at Westgate guarded and ministered to her father with an unselfish tenderness hardly to be put into words.

Nor was he by any means left in undisturbed retirement at Westgate. His old friends and political comrades went often to see him, and although his life was tame in comparison with that which had been, it had nevertheless many and varied interests.

He loved the sea. Often he used to say that he could never be happy for very long away from it. And the seas and skies of that part of the coast seemed to appeal—perhaps not altogether beneficially in the mental sense—to that mystic, melancholy strain in his own nature which he attributed to his Celtic origin. It may be the position of the place—facing north, and the flatness of the country behind where there is nothing to break the wind, so that the air has a kind of other-world clearness—which produces the dreamy brooding effect of the Westgate atmosphere. Breathed for a short time, it brings a great sense of soothing. One might imagine it, after months, becoming exceedingly depressing. The very sea—grey, melancholy, laden with wrack of weed—breaking with slow, almost stealthy movement against the white chalk cliffs, seems to bear with it a suggestion of inevitableness. Even the sunsets, beautiful as they are, bring the feeling of loneliness and of infinity.

Westgate is famous for its sunsets. We novelists are fond of writing about opaline tints and pearly clouds and such-like, but at Westgate one really beholds skies that are

veritable opaline rose and opaline green. Wondrous nights too—clear as tropic nights seen from a steamer's deck—the sky, deepest blue, glittering constellations, marvellously near and distinct, and often that curious effect—a moon halo—which has an odd weirdness of its own.

Yet one can fancy such moods of Nature encouraging the brooding mood in man—especially when gradually failing eyesight bars the world of books—and there were times when Mr. McCarthy chafed silently against conditions and yearned within himself for his old 'world of men.'

He writes from his new quarters :

Sea Lawn Bungalow, Westgate on-Sea, July 29, '97.

'I am much better already for the change and the sea air. The journey down did not fatigue me so much as I expected. . . . I find the sea delightful. We have walked and driven a great deal, and I begin to sleep well.

'I have not read Maeterlinck's play—I presume it is a play—and I don't suppose we could get it here. Could you lend it to me ? I have read many plays of his, and with great interest.'

Westgate, Aug. '97.

'I am doing very well here. Charlotte and I had quite a long walk by the sea before luncheon to-day. Our movements are quite as unsettled as your own. . . . Most of your suggestions have already been adopted : the rest shall be faithfully carried out. I will tell you all about them when we meet.

'Your quotation is an immense improvement, and I gladly carry it out. Don't get distressed and dejected about your work. Be of good heart.

'I have been and am busy in reading my proofs of my "Story of the Life of Gladstone" for the London Edition, which is to appear very soon. This is the first serious piece of work I have attended to since my breakdown, and I don't feel any the better for the work—I get so easily tired even yet. But I am glad you think well of the book—it was written in much haste.

'We have bright weather here, but very blowy, and I am getting on well, although inclined, I think, to work too much for my strength—and even still I am very weak. We have let our London house. . . . I shall only go up for the meeting

of Parliament. Even already London life seems to have faded from my view and I don't feel as if I belonged to it any more. I wish I could read Lucian with you—I used to delight in Lucian and Æschylus and Sophocles and Euripides. I like Sophocles most of the three. The best translation I know of him is by Professor Plumptre. Years ago I made one of my romance heroines—alas! I forget her name—rave about him. I can't tell you of any good recent translation of Æschylus or Euripides, although I know there must be such.

'I have just heard that Professor Plumptre has translated some at least of the tragedies of Æschylus. If so, these I think would be the best you could get.

'I am having my books brought down here . . . and I am preparing to go to work at a volume of history for the series called "The Story of the Nations."'

'. . . Don't think of coming here unless on a very fine day and amid the most favourable physical conditions. . . . Any day that will suit you, will suit us. . . . Yes, I know well how it feels to have raised the curtain of the other world and then been allowed to let it fall again.' Oct. 7, '97.

'I would have written to you before this, only that I have been very busy correcting, adding to, and smoothing out my fifth volume [1] for a new edition. The volume was finished up in such a hurry just before I fell ill, that it abounds in errors, and has some serious omissions. Now I think it is put pretty right, but I work so slowly even yet, although I am distinctly regaining health. We spent a quiet Christmas. . . . I find it a sad, ghostly anniversary always. . . . Now all with me is coming to be mere retrospect. . . . I have no personal ambition, and no stirring political zeal or hope, and, as regards my literary work, I have "given my measure" and there is nothing particular to come. I shall go on writing books, because I have to write them, and that is all. I always like to hear of your literary work all the same. You see you are half a lifetime younger than I am. . . . These blots are the work of a lively, naughty little cat who always makes for me when she comes into the room.' Westgate Oct. 29, '97. Dec. 31, '97.

'I very much wish this to greet you when you arrive at Cannes, and to be like the grasp of a friendly hand when you reach your hotel. Westgate Feb. 11, '98.

[1] Of *The History of Our Own Times.*

'There is a good translation of "Pliny's Letters" in the Bohn Edition, and I will find out something about the Domitian time. . . . I felt to the quick all that you say about the fading away of the world.

'I have been thinking very much over your idea about the volume of "Impressions": and I should dearly like to do it in the way you suggest. We will make the idea take shape somehow.'

In my last visit to Westgate before leaving England for Cannes I had suggested to Mr. McCarthy that we should do together a book which should be a sort of modified version of 'Our Book of Memories,' calling it 'Impressions of the Eighties,' but the notion never came to anything. Working in collaboration was not practicable for either of us.

March 24, '98.

'I was delighted to know of your safe arrival. . . . We are having cold and windy weather here, with the frequent snowflake appearing and then disappearing—a freakish reminder that winter is not by any means over. I grumble and swear at the weather mentally, but it does not seem to care. I am engaged at present in some dreary work—the preparation of a final chapter to my "Gladstone," to complete the new edition which is to be published at once when all is over. It seems like the digging of a friend's grave, while yet the friend is alive.'

Westgate April 1, '98.

'. . . Most truly do I wish I were with you in Rome! It would be a time indeed to make life bright again. . . . Life is going on here in the old quiet way. I walk out a good deal when the sun shines, and I am read to and do some work. I recall past times a good deal and brood a little, yet try to keep my spirits up as well as may be. The quietude has something melancholy and deadening in it now and then—the long chapter of activity closed! But the sea is always a delight even when it is cold, and I miss the warm skies of the days when I was a Greek and wandered and dreamed by the blue Ægean.[1] . . . I should indeed like to pass my closing days in

[1] Mr. McCarthy and I had lately been discussing the theory of reincarnation then beginning to gain ground among thinkers and to which he was inclined to give a certain whimsical acceptance as a poetic and not

Rome or Athens or Jerusalem—I should dearly love any of these three as a final chapter. . . . We are here for a year at all events—and as for the time after that, it would be futile to take account of that just yet. The time goes pleasantly enough, but I am lonely of soul somehow. I am not allowed to read much, and I meditate and brood a good deal to no manner of purpose. I have no reason to complain but much to be thankful for to the high gods.'

About this time he was helping me in some study of Rome under the Caesars, upon which I was then engaged.

'You will find all you want to know about Domitian in Tacitus and Suetonius and Niebuhr. There is no doubt an English translation of Niebuhr, but I don't know of it. I used to delight in the "Thebais" of Statius, although I believe true scholars do not admire it. I shall try to find out about an English translation—I think Pope began one but did not finish it—I'll let you know.'

'I have been looking over my books and I find that, of Tacitus, I have only got the "Annals": and I think whatever is to be got at about Domitian must be in the History, which unfortunately I have not either in original or translation. I have not read Tacitus for years and years and my memory of him is waxing faint and misty. How I wish I had time to read all the classics over again! Some of them—Homer, Virgil, Horace and a few others, I know as I know Shakespeare and Goethe, and except for the mere delight of re-reading them, I should gain but little. But I should love to study once again the Greek dramatists and Demosthenes and Tacitus and Lucretius, and become young again in the study. I have begun my personal recollections. I can't write or read much. I am getting on very well, and I enjoy my growing strength and have no longing to hurry back into politics and London. There is little or no intellectual companionship here, and I feel the want of such, but if I could read more, I should not mind so much. And there is always the sea! Life seems all

April 30, '98.

unreasonable explanation of some of the mysteries of human life. I think however, that the only foundation he allowed himself to recognise for such fantastic speculation, unsanctioned by his own creed, lay in those glimmering flashes he had sometimes described to me, of pre-existence in ancient Greece.

changed—absolutely changed for me—in its ways and surroundings at all events. . . .'

Westgate, May 3, '98.

'I am working at my "Reminiscences," but of course I only do a little work every day. I feel sometimes a longing to go on a voyage round the world or to rush up to the House of Commons and fire off a long speech—a vague, meaningless, futile longing to go somewhere and do something. In truth I rather chafe at being invalided—and yet I know full well that I am still an invalid for whom active life is really over. Probably I shall settle down more quietly later on and find outlet enough in my writing of books, but as yet I chafe in spite of myself at the enforced seclusion. Then too I have to indulge my love of reading in a very restricted sort of way, and that intensifies my sense of constant limitation. . . .'

He writes upon the day on which Mr. Gladstone died :

May 19, '98.

'Your letter was a most welcome visitor this dark, drenching day with its sad associations. I only write a line to thank you for it. I am working away at the closing pages for the new issue of my "Gladstone" book—that have to be posted to New York to-night. It is very gloomy work—like the work of an undertaker. I will write to you more fully in a day or two. . . .'

Westgate, May 26, '98.

'I would have written to you before this, but that literary labours when they come "come not as single spies but in battalions." The proofs of my "Nineteenth Century" volume came down on me along with the finishing of "Gladstone," and kept me hard at work. Perhaps it was as well, for I had the less time to brood over all the memories that the great man's death brings up. The life and death of such a man ought surely to teach a great, deep lesson to the world. I feel that I, at least, have no further relish for active politics—whether that be a wholesome lesson or not, I hardly like to ask myself.

'I had a visit from the Dillons on Sunday, and I arranged definitely with John that I am to hold my seat only to the end of this session, and then I shall formally resign and then absolutely resign. For party reasons it would be inconvenient to give an opening for a contested election in North Longford just now, and I shall therefore hold my seat nominally until the end of the session, and then I shall formally resign. In the

meantime I shall not go to London, and I have done with the House of Commons. Well—well, I entered it with high hopes nearly twenty years ago—and now! I could be sorry—but there are so many things to be sorry about! Your letter touched me with its generous sympathy.'

'I am immersed in proofs of my "Nineteenth Century," and on the whole I am rather sorry that I undertook the task, for it involves almost endless looking up of books and verifying of dates and the discovery of omissions that have to be supplied and so on. . . . Still it is practically done, and grumbling is idle work.' July 4, '98.

'I have to get some advice from Nettleship the oculist. I shall go up and come down the same day. My doctor tells me that will be much less of a risk than to spend a night in a strange hotel. Only think what it has come to be with me! When a night in a strange hotel is considered a danger!' July 14, '98.

In answer to a question of mine he writes:

'Gladstone made his last speech in the House of Commons on Monday, March 4th, 1894. I have not the whole speech near me, but the part which concerns your book was where he said that the conflict between the jurisdiction of the House of Lords and that of the House of Commons is one that "cannot continue." "It is a question," he said, speaking slowly and emphatically, "that has become profoundly acute—a question that will command a settlement, and must at an early date receive that settlement from the highest authority—the authority that is—of the whole nation." Aug. 23.

'That was his farewell declaration.

'I should like to write you a much longer letter, but my eyes warn me to stop. I could write to you of many things—but, some other time! . . . My eyes require constant attention just now. I cannot read at all, and this scrawl to you I dash off without any attempt to read over what I have written. It is a very severe trial not to be able to glance at a book. . . .'

'Your letter gave me a most interesting picture of your doings and your readings. I was charmed with the picture of your country life and the church and the people. . . . Have you read Miss Wilkins' "Silence"? Some of the stories are beautiful—that called "Evelina's Garden" is a Sept. 22, '98.

love-dream worthy of Hawthorne. I am delighted that you read and love the Greek dramas—you could not do better: they touch the very heaven of art.

'I know Pater's books—I knew the man himself—but somehow his style seems to want simplicity and to be too self-conscious. Still I own to the fascination of his "Essays." I work at my "Reminiscences" a little every day and walk a good deal and do my best to exorcise my familiar demon of melancholy.'

Westgate, Dec. 2, '98. 'I only write a line to tell you about your Ministerial crisis.[1] The resigning Minister would move the adjournment of the House to a certain day and in the meantime would endeavour to form a Government. If he failed, he would come to the House on the appointed day and announce his resignation, and the House would be again adjourned until the new Ministry had been formed.'

Dec. 10, '98. 'I have just heard with deepest regret that my dear old friend, William Black, is dead. He died at Brighton last night. . . . I return Sir George Bowen's letter and article. The article is full of interest and admirably written—a really valuable State-paper in fact, with all the views of which I thoroughly agree. I give him my cordial admiration.'

Dec. 31, '98. 'I just send you a word of greeting and good will, dearest Colleague, to reach you on the morning of the New Year. May it prove in every way a brighter and a better year than that which is now closing.'

[1] In a novel I was writing.

CHAPTER XXVII

A WORLD OF DULL, GREY SHADOWS

Now, in these uneventful days at Westgate, a year may be dismissed almost in a page :

'I am glad indeed to know that all has gone well with you at Cannes. Your visit to Westgate is, and will be, a living memory bearing me back to days that were living and real—before the days, when so far as this world is concerned, all has come to be merely a retrospect. I have no active life before me : no ambition, no hope but the hope of quiet until the end. But the companionship with you is as close as ever : that obligation is sacred and immortal. 11 Roxburgh Road, Westgate, Feb. 29, '99.

'I shall send you to-morrow "My Old Schoolmaster in Cork." I hope you will like it.'

'. . . . This is the first letter I have attempted to write for many months. I am assured that my eyes are on the way to a cure, but the cure must move slowly, and I have to be patient. I must not write any more now.' Nov. 14, '99.

'. . . Your letter about Geoff touched me deeply. Yet now that I have had time to think over it, I do not know that I am grieved. If the wound is but slight and the boy is kept out of the field, and the war meantime comes to a close, is it not all the better for Geoff and for you ? The boy will have done his duty like the brave young soldier he is, and he will return safely to those who love him and are rightly proud of him. My whole soul of sympathy is with you at such a time.' [1] March 28. 1900.

'Your letter gave me much pleasure and much theme too July 14, 1900.

[1] Mr. McCarthy alludes to my son Geoffrey, who was wounded in the Boer War.

for melancholy thought. Yes, I can feel as you must have felt when you revisited the House and the Terrace. What evenings we have had there—what dreams we put into life there—and now, what a sea rolls between this time and then!

'I want to hear more about your book, though the man you tell me of will be far too good to be like me. Yet I am proud to know that you think so well of me and my life-struggle, and that John Dillon supports your generous judgment.'

Westgate, June 22, 1901. '. . . Your letter gave me ever so much pleasure, because it told me that you liked "Mononia." I know the ordinary public would not be likely to care much about it, but I wrote it really as a sort of bequest to the dear, old Cause, and to those who could feel sympathy with it. Do you remember my saying to you, ever so many years ago, that I should like to have died on some battle-field for the cause of Ireland. I feel just the same even still. . . .'

June 28, '01. '. . . My heartfelt congratulations on your delightful news. Dear, brave, gallant Geoff! He has well won his rank, and his friends must all be proud of him. I loved him when he was a child, and I had always faith in him, and felt sure he would vindicate his career. I rejoice to write this on this particular anniversary. . . .'[1]

July '01. '. . . I am working steadily at "Queen Anne," but it is a slow process as every line of historical research has to be read out to me. I intend to make it two volumes—about the same size as the volume of the "Georges." I did not begin until late in February, and I have rather more than half a volume accomplished at present. I like the work very much, but of course it requires a great deal of looking up in other histories and books of various kinds, and I mean to make it thoroughly descriptive as far as I can of the great men as well as of the great events of the age. My object is to give the readers, if I can, something like a moving picture of the whole reign and of those who helped to make it or who might have marred it. It is not a book that one could hurry on with, in any case, if he wanted to make his work worth doing, and it could hardly be published under any conditions for at least another year. It has been done so far with very little interruption.

[1] The anniversary of our literary collaboration.

For the last few days I have had to turn away from it to write a short story for Arthur Spurgeon, and I have sometimes interrupted it in order to send off my monthly letter to the *New York Independent*. But except for these slight interruptions, I have been working at the history and nothing else, and find it more and more growing on me from week to week. This is something rather fascinating in thus finding oneself brought into a sort of almost living companionship with the men and women of such a reign, and I really think that the work decidedly helps me to get better in health. I think my sight is really improving, though I cannot as yet attempt to do anything that could really be called reading. Luckily for me, the story of Queen Anne's reign has been told by so many writers that I have no occasion to think about hunting up original documents, and all the books that I could possibly want can be easily got at. My friend, Mr. Cope, who lives near me, has an excellent library, and Bishop Burnet's "History of His Own Times" has for months back been transferred from Cope's shelves to mine, and is likely to remain thus transferred for many months to come.

'I am longing for the completion and the appearance of your Roman novel. I hope the translation I sent you may be of some use. It is a beautiful and a thrilling passage, and I only wish that I could do it full justice. . . .'[1]

'The announcement of peace made me think of Geoff. I thought of the relief it would bring to your heart to know that your boy is now free from the chances, the horrors of war, and that you may soon see him again. . . . June 3, 1902.

[1] The passage to which Mr. McCarthy alludes, is that with which Ovid closes his *Metamorphoses*, and which contains a prophecy of his own fame, so strangely applicable to the conditions under which he is read in modern England that I asked Mr. McCarthy—who I was surprised to find had not before noticed it—to translate it according to his reading of the passage. I seem to have lost his translation, which, however, hardly differed from that in the Bohn edition, curious enough, perhaps to quote: 'And now I have completed a work which neither the anger of Jove, nor fire, nor steel nor consuming time will be able to destroy! Let that day, which has no power but over this body, put an end to the term of my uncertain life, when it will. Yet in my better part, I shall be raised immortal above the lofty stars, and indelible shall be my name. And wherever the Roman power is extended throughout the vanquished earth, I shall be read by the lips of nations, and (if the presages of Poets have aught of truth) throughout all ages shall I survive in fame.'

'. . . Out of England! Oh, yes indeed, I long to be away in some far region. . . .'

Westgate, June 10, '02.

'. . . I think I have quite finished the writing of "Queen Anne," and have only the proofs and revises to look after. I do not much like the book now that it is done, but that is perhaps the mood in which the author is apt to contemplate his completed task. It seems to fall so far short of one's ideal. No doubt the disparity seems all the greater when one is not able to read or write for himself. There are times when the business of life begins to shew itself somewhat wearisome and meaningless. You must know such times, but I suppose we must not allow such feeling to get any mastery over us.'

'. . . Yes, I do indeed remember that garden party where we met Gladstone. . . . It does in very truth seem a long time ago. For some of us a wholly different stage of existence appears to have come up. I look back upon that past time with a melancholy pleasure. No such life could come back again for me on this side of the dark, dividing stream. I appear to have settled down to a mere struggle for existence. And yet I well know—and in my better moods, cordially recognize how much I have to be thankful for—better health, sight rather better, love of work and books, and a most devoted daughter who is always with me. . . .'

July 22, '02.

'. . . I have just heard with deep regret that Kegan Paul has gone to the grave. He was a close friend of ours for many years, and is associated with bright and sad recollections. I do not know that I ought to sorrow for his death—I do not believe that he had anything left in life to live for. Still we have all got that lingering, ingrained feeling about the need of life—mere life—which makes us regard death—mere death—as a calamity, without stopping to ask ourselves whether life on this earth is always so priceless a blessing. However, it is too outworn a subject for philosophizing, and I am sure Kegan Paul had thought it over many a time. . . .'

Aug. 25, '02.

'. . . I am always anxious to hear about your work. . . . I only average 1000 words a day—but then of course my historical references have to be read to me, and such reading takes time and is never so satisfactory as what one can study for himself. It is all a dead level of movement, and one has to try back a great deal. I am one of those who, as Horace

says, take in meanings much more slowly through the ears than through the eyes.'

'. . . Your letter and your book are with me—and are most welcome. I was actually about to write to you asking you to send me the book with your name and mine written in it—and now comes the book with the inscription. Sept. 2, 1902.

'I have got Bulkley's letter, and it gave me the most heartfelt pleasure. Of course I cannot feel that my History deserves all the generous praise he gives it, but I do feel that that is exactly the praise I should especially like to deserve, and that my highest desire was to produce a book which could be read as he has read it. . . .

'. . . I rushed up to London with Huntly last Saturday to see his play. It went splendidly. We caught the down train before the curtain fell, and I saw nothing of London but St. James' Street. I felt like a ghost come for a moment—only a moment—back to a former life.'

'. . . I do my work every day by dictation to my typewriter as before, and I have enough in hand to keep me going for a year—and then I shall begin the closing volume of my "History of Our Own Times," to bring the story down to the end of Queen Victoria's reign. What memories of long years the continuance of that work brings with it!' Oct. '02.

'. . . I have received a piece of news which will interest you, dear Colleague. I have had a letter from Arthur Balfour in which he tells me that as Prime Minister he has, *without consulting me*, recommended my name to the King for a "Civil List" pension because of my services to literature, and that I am to have in due course a pension of £250 a year! Now was not that kind of Balfour—and to do it, as he says, entirely without consulting me? Of course, I have gratefully accepted. . . . It is a high honour, and I am grateful.' Oct. 31, '02.

'I wonder how you are getting on, and I hope that at least you have better weather than we are experiencing down here. We are locked up in snow, and the cold is intense, even for snow, and we have keen north-east winds. . . . I have nothing new to tell you, although I could find a good deal to say if I were able to write you a real, long letter as in the old days. This is but a knock on the wall of our divided cells—such as the prisoners used to give in romance, to remind each other of their nearness and their separation.' Dec. '02.

Westgate on-Sea, March 24, 1903.

'We are in the agonies of removal—we have to be in our new home by the end of the week. My address thenceforth will be "Herdholt," Westgate-on-Sea. The name is a device of Huntly's from some Scandinavian legend which brings in an Irish princess or prince. The house is pretty and is very beautifully situated. You must come and have a look at it some time before long. . . .'

Sept. 14, '03.

'. . . How I do wish I could have you as my secretary in the working out of this autobiography! I should love even to be near enough to you for a frequent talk over it. But we can't regulate the fates as we would, and I must plod along. Ray does the typewriting at my dictation. . . . I am not putting much of my feelings into the autobiography. I only tell the story of my outer life. . . .'

Herdholt, Westgate on-Sea, Jan. 15, 1905.

'A few lines to let you know that I still live, move, and have my being . . . but my life is to me somewhat dream-like. I seem to myself to be a man living really in the past, and the actualities of the present are but as mere shadows. I have ever so much to be thankful for to the powers that rule the earth, but my habitual mood is one of melancholy. I hope I do not allow this to shew itself to those around me, and you are certainly the only one to whom I have ever given it expression. Even now I doubt whether I have done fairly by you in thus inflicting my dismalness on you, but you will understand and forgive.'

April 1.

'You will have heard of the sad death of our dear, old friend, Sir Francis Jeune, lately Lord St. Helier, and the widowhood of dear Lady Jeune so soon after the death of their beloved and only son. I have hardly ever heard of a sadder story, and I have held her for many years among my closest and dearest friends.

'Lady Agatha Russell has lately been spending a few days at Westgate in your old quarters at Mrs. Herring's,[1] and we saw much of her and had many delightful talks. We are all very well, and I am working steadily at my History. I am really in very good physical health, but I feel the pressure of growing years and seem to be quietly waiting for the end.'

May 14.

'I have received an offer and a very pressing request to join in a work about to be undertaken by the Harmsworths of

[1] At 2 Adrian Square, where I spent most comfortably many months at different times, for my own health's sake, and to be near my old friend.

MR. JUSTIN McCARTHY IN HIS STUDY AT WESTGATE-ON-SEA

the *Daily Mail*, to join in an undertaking of theirs to bring out a work of elementary instruction in science and art and history to be published by instalments—a very library of popular education. I am asked to write a condensed and picturesque "History of the World"—think of that! I am well inclined to venture on the task—it is to be completed in from 50,000 to 100,000 words. . . . I have nearly finished my own "History of Our Own Times" and shall soon be free for new work. I shall let you know when we come to a definite settlement one way or the other. I thought it would interest you to hear of this at once.'

'. . . The negotiations for that little work—only the history of the world!—are going on well, and the only question still unsettled is as to the time when my work should begin—for I have still to finish my history of "Our Own Times," and cannot turn on to anything else until that is done. . . . You know I could not enjoy life here or indeed anywhere without literary work.' May 28.

'. . . I read with intense interest your account of Sarah Bernhardt. . . . I have been out of all way of dramatic art for a long time. Sarah Bernhardt is a far away memory for me. . . . It would indeed be delightful if you could pay another visit to Westgate and we could have once again some talks together. . . . I am working as far as I can, on my "History" —I am yet only in the dawn of history. It is very slow work, everything has to be read and re-read to me . . . you do not know what it is not to be able to read a book—the privation is a sad and constant trial to one who has always loved reading. . . .' July 16.

'I much regretted not being able to attend the ceremonial at the unveiling of the Gladstone monument yesterday. I had received a very courteous invitation from Lord Spencer, who was to have presided but was prevented by his attack of ill-health, and I should have felt much pride in making one of those engaged in such a great tribute to such a great career—a career of which I had seen so much. But I could not venture on the double journey at this time of the year.' Herdholt, Nov 5, '05.

'Just one of my scrap-notes to let you know how I am going on and what a welcome I ever give to your letters. It brings me a revival of my old self, and my old life, to receive Nov. 19.

every now and then some accounts of your doings and of your intercourse with your friends.'

Herdholt, Dec. 31, '05. 'Your letter and its wishes for me in the New Year were the happiest and most welcome auguries which could have heralded it in for me. I send you in return my hopes that the New Year may bring you some compensation for past troubles and with it some bright hopes and prospects of happiness for you and all who are near and dear to you. . . .'

Feb. 25, 1906. 'We are living out our quiet life here, in a manner for which a reasonable mortal ought to feel very thankful to the destinies. But when I read of the great political struggles going on, I am often in a mood to lament my later London life and the House of Commons and the keen excitement of my days. . . . I sometimes feel as if I were looking back on that life out of a world of dull, grey shadows. Well, I ought not to write in this way, and indeed there is no one else to whom I would write in such a fashion. . . .'

Mar. 11, '06. 'I was delighted to hear that there is a possibility of your coming down here within the next two or three weeks. . . . We have not had a walk and a talk for a long time, and I want to hear all about your plans of life and to talk to you also about myself. I have indeed no plans of life. I have merely to run my course as it is going, but I should like to talk it over with you none the less.'

July 8. 'How I wish I could write you a long letter. . . . You say that we are both growing old—dear colleague, *you* may be, but I *have* grown old, and I feel that my course is nearly run. These memories of our work together carry me back to our brightest enjoyments. I so dearly wish we had finished that story about the woman with the one white lock on her forehead.[1] Perhaps we may finish it even yet. . . .'

Sept. 11, '06. 'Your letter was most welcome. I look forward with hope and delight to the prospect of meeting you here in October and to the likelihood of our having more time together. Dear old Mrs. Sartoris—so old! but yet so young! I was very glad to hear of your visit to her. What a rush of memories her very name brings with it to me!'

The close of 1906 and beginning of the following year I

[1] A fellow-passenger on our voyage to America, whose interesting face and one snow-white streak of hair had impressed us both.

spent at Westgate, and saw as much of my old friend as wintry weather would permit. My own health not being good he used to come and sit with me frequently, his daughter perhaps leaving him, when for an hour or so we could chat over old times.

The year ends with his greeting.

'. . . I am very sorry but not much surprised to hear, dear colleague, that this cruel weather has done you some hurt. I did not venture out yesterday and do not know yet if I can go out to-day—although I keep fairly well, I do not know when we shall be able to arrange another meeting with you. May it be soon!' Dec. 27, '06.

'Loving wishes for your bright New Year from us all, ever so many thanks for your welcome volume, which I know I shall read with interest. Your anecdote about the unknown Australian plant and its inspiring influence would be well worth a chapter in itself.' Jan. 1907.

Here Mr. McCarthy refers to a volume of Australian tales of mine and to an odd little experience in connection with one of them, interesting enough perhaps to note.

I had been trying one foggy and inexpressibly dreary March day, that as it happened was my birthday, to write to order a short story of the Bush, and was thinking of giving up in despair the task of getting my imagination back into the Australian atmosphere. Just then there was brought in a small weedy plant in a pot with an insignificant purple blossom, quite unknown to me, the gift of an anonymous donor. The plant was set down. I wondered why such a plant should have been sent me and plunged into my work once more. Gradually a rather peculiar perfume which I did not know at all, began to pervade the room, and I became aware that the story was 'going' at last and that I was, mentally speaking, not in London but among the once familiar gum-trees of my own land. Mr. McCarthy said

afterwards that ' Old Berris of Boggo Creek ' was the most vivid of my short stories. Showing the new plant, later on, to an Australian friend from New South Wales—a colony I scarcely know and with the special vegetation of which I am unacquainted—she recognised it instantly as a plant growing there in Bush gullies and called colloquially and inappropriately ' The Australian Rose.'

Spring, 1907. '. . . We had a pleasant visit of a few days from Harry Irving—son of the late Sir Henry—he is a most interesting and companionable man. . . .

'. . . Just one of my scrap-notes to express my hope that you are well. . . . My " Short History " is all but finished. . . . We had a charming visit from Baroness Orczy and her husband, and I need hardly say that she and I talked much of you. . . . We have had visits lately from Ellen Terry and her young husband—and Fitzgerald Molloy. I have actually started my novel, but do not yet see the story. No doubt it will reveal itself in time.'

May '07. ' Ever so many thanks, dear colleague, for your letter and the *Daily Graphic*.[1] I had seen the paper—it was actually sent to me by the station officials. I liked the article in every way and felt proud, at the same time so much touched while reading it. . . . I wish I could write you a long letter, a real letter, dearest colleague, but my eyes are rather weak and I must not, yet I want to tell you how grieved I am to hear about dear Nancy's illness. . . . Why am I not somewhere near to you so that I could look in upon you now and then ? And my eyes are just now very weak—the effects of a heavy cold, I think, and I can hardly see to write. I have not been very well these days owing, I think, to the fierce winter weather we are having now down here, and I am oppressed by my familiar melancholy—you remember my old haunting goblin: you have often charmed it away.'

[1] This was an interview with Mr. McCarthy and description of his surroundings which I had been asked to write for the *Daily Graphic*.

CHAPTER XXVIII

'UPON HIM HATH THE LIGHT SHINED'

I HAVE before me the last small pile of letters from my literary colleague, among them some typewritten sheets dictated to his daughter or his secretary, but most of them no more than a few lines in the old familiar handwriting—the small pointed characters, though tremulous from failing eyesight, retaining their peculiar distinctiveness to the last.

In the following May and June I again went to Westgate to be near my old friend whom I saw almost every day. He had just returned from a visit to Stratford-on-Avon, and at our first meetings, he seemed to me benefited by the change. Then later came his little note.

'I was full of the hope of meeting you on the Green this afternoon, but I have somehow got suddenly a very heavy cold and also some internal trouble: and Dr. Heaton insists that I must stay indoors this evening and night and keep perfectly quiet. . . . I am so disappointed and so surprised. . . .' June 11, 1908.

It was sent on the morning of a day when we were to have walked together on the cliffs near his house—where, along those cliffs, meanders the stretch of white road leading towards Birchington and disappearing as the crest of the rise touches the horizon. Mr. McCarthy used to call that

winding bit of road, losing itself in the sky, 'The Road of Imagination,' and has written some words full of feeling about it in one of his books.

On the evening of that day I went to his house to see how he was, and found him sitting up, but obviously far from well. I do not quite know why, at the time, that illness of his impressed me with a painful foreshadowing of the end, which, however, did not come until some time later: but so it was; and his daughter, whose unselfish devotion during all those darkened years has been so infinitely beautiful, was likewise uneasy at the change so apparent to both of us. The brooding depression from which he often suffered was the more marked now that he had less power to hide it. In old days he had frequently written and spoken to me of the 'pools of melancholy' into which he sometimes fell; but the many interests and the rush and stress of his literary and political life had made it comparatively easy for him to rise out of the slough of despond or at least to conceal these moods of sadness so effectually that very few of those less in his confidence than myself had any idea of their real hold upon him.

But in these sombre days when there was so little variation in the daily round and when, as sight failed, the joy and solace of reading was denied him, it was small wonder that the pools of melancholy widened and deepened into a grey dreary sea—such a sea, speaking figuratively, as I have often watched on winter evenings creeping in upon the shore at Westgate.

I remember well the last evening but one of my stay on that occasion—my dining at Herdholt—a sad little festival, more mournful, looking back, than at the time it seemed, though even then I could not get over the feeling that I might never again break bread, in the once familiar social fashion, with my dear old literary comrade—my friend, with

never a break nor a misunderstanding, of so many years. My mind went back to the many times when he had shared our family meals—always a welcome guest to me and mine—to gatherings in London : to week-ends at Chester House and Woodlands : to dinners at the House of Commons, often interrupted by the division-bell, in the days when we wrote our political novels together : to queer little repasts at East-end eating-houses and riverside tea-places in the intervals of hunting ' copy ' for ' The Grey River ' and other joint work : to Riviera hotels and picnics in the hills behind Grasse : to the Atlantic steamboat ; to caravanserais in New York and Boston—strange, shifting medley of scenes and incidents in that gracious, kindly companionship. A companionship so rich in the intellectual sense that it was veritably an education to me—one of those rare companionships between man and woman in which there can be no aftertaste of bitterness, no alloy of regret save that which is inevitable to its natural passing.

On this evening, I went to the house purposely a little before the dinner-hour, and Mr. McCarthy came into his study to greet me, walking feebly but welcoming me with his usual affectionate courtesy. We two sat and talked alone for a while, and his memory, too, went back on the past. He spoke of the bond of literary interest and close friendship that had for so long held us.

' One thing I want you to know for certain,' he said with touching solemnity—' I want you to know that however else I may have changed, I have never changed an iota in my feelings towards you.' And then he added, ' I will say to you what I would not say to others who care for me and whom the thought would sadden. My dear, I regard myself just as one who is waiting—waiting : one who knows that the Omnibus is shortly coming that shall take him away.'

'But we know too,' I said, 'that the Omnibus which takes us away will take us to a fuller, happier life.'

He shook his head with a doubtful smile. 'We hope so, but we do not know for certain what that life will be.'

I told him of my own intense conviction—flashed on me at moments of sinking vitality, when the 'Other Side' had seemed very near—that the true glory and beauty of existence lie outside the bonds of physical matter, and that we live, in the richest sense, not through the fleshly body down here, but through the larger individuality which has its home on the higher levels of being and with which, ordinarily speaking, we most often make acquaintance in sleep. He seemed deeply interested in a little gleam of the dream-memory I had brought back a few nights before—the memory of music, as real and vivid as that of any music I have ever heard with my bodily ears, only immeasurably more glorious. I could indeed have reminded him of experiences of his own of which he had talked to me in the days of our literary work together, though he seemed to have forgotten them now—strange dream-experiences—dreams of a Greek life: dreams of whole stories that he had afterwards written. But there was no time then to pursue the subject. At dinner, he seemed at first to be immersed again in his 'pool of melancholy.' Then suddenly, he roused, his face lightened and there was a flash of the old intellectual fire—a pale, ghostly flash evoked by an allusion to one of Horace's Odes that had been his special favourite.

He began to quote softly in Latin—quoted several lines and then stopped. 'I used to be able to say the whole of that by heart,' he said.

From Horace—by way of one or two stories he told of certain apt cappings of classical quotation—we drifted on to talk of the ghosts of the eighties—men and women who

had played their parts and made their last exit from the scene. He spoke of my old friend Mr. Sartoris and reminded me of our first meeting, of our fellow-guests, at that memorable little dinner—of who had taken in whom, and of their placing at table: and then, after his fashion of retrospect, he called up name after name of those who were now no more than names in the world of flesh.

I saw him again the next day—that before my departure. Two or three old friends of his had come by train that day to see him, and we all accompanied these back to the station on their way home. But Mr. McCarthy was manifestly unfit for the exertion: his steps were very feeble, and bodily fatigue showed its effects on mind and spirit. We sat together apart on a bench at the railway station, and again he talked of the 'Omnibus' for which he was waiting and of friends who had passed away in Death's coach.

In the evening, after dining at my lodgings, I strolled up the sea-front to Mr. McCarthy's house to bid him good-bye, for I was leaving Westgate early next morning. I shall never forget the sunset. Westgate is specially famous for its sunsets, but I had never seen one quite so gorgeous as this one. Sky and sea melted into each other making a great lake of rosy fire that stretched between banks of purple cloud and the near purple shore. For the tide was well out and the weed-covered rocks had caught the hue of the clouds, with here and there among them small pools that the tide had left of the colour of flame. And in mid-heaven, above the banks of purple cloud, were gleaming bars, so that beyond the lake of fire there seemed to shine the eternal Gates of Gold.

I found my old friend rested and more himself. He, too, with his daughter had been watching the wonderful sunset, and we talked of it, comparing it with certain other sunsets

that we had seen together from the banks of the Thames when making our notes for 'The Grey River.'

* * * * * * *

It had always been our custom to send each other on the anniversary of our agreement of literary co-partnership, some little memento of that event. Soon after I got home, when he appeared to be restored to his normal health, he wrote me this little letter :

June 28, 1908. 'Ever so many thanks, dearest colleague, for your delightful little gift in honour of this memorable day in both our literary lives. It looks on me now in my study where I write these words. . . .'

July 3. '. . . I have been thinking of some appropriate offering I could send you in return for your delightful gift. . . . Now it comes into existence in the form of an excellent photograph of my portrait by Waite. Let it tell you ever of my affection and remind you of dear old days of literary companionship. . . . I wish we could live within closer range of each other than we have been able to do within I know not how many years—they seem very many to me!'

Aug. 30. '. . . I am keeping in very good health, all things considered, but of course I know that I am only waiting for the end. Charlotte is well and sends her love—she devotes her life to me. . . .'

Oct. 26. '. . . The "fiendish" winter weather, as you very properly call it gave me some severe colds which affected my eyes so that I am once again under the treatment of an oculist. . . . Charlotte and I are thinking of passing the worst of the winter months at Folkestone—you see what blots I make!—we give up this house towards the close of December, but there is yet ample time I hope to receive a visit from you. . . . I do so wish I could write you a longer letter—but alas! alas!! You can see the reasons why I cannot. . . .'

Dec. 26, '08. 'Your letter was welcome, no matter what may have been the struggles with the typewriter. Your visit here was a delightful episode in my life and seems now like a sudden and magical restoration of vanished days. . . .'

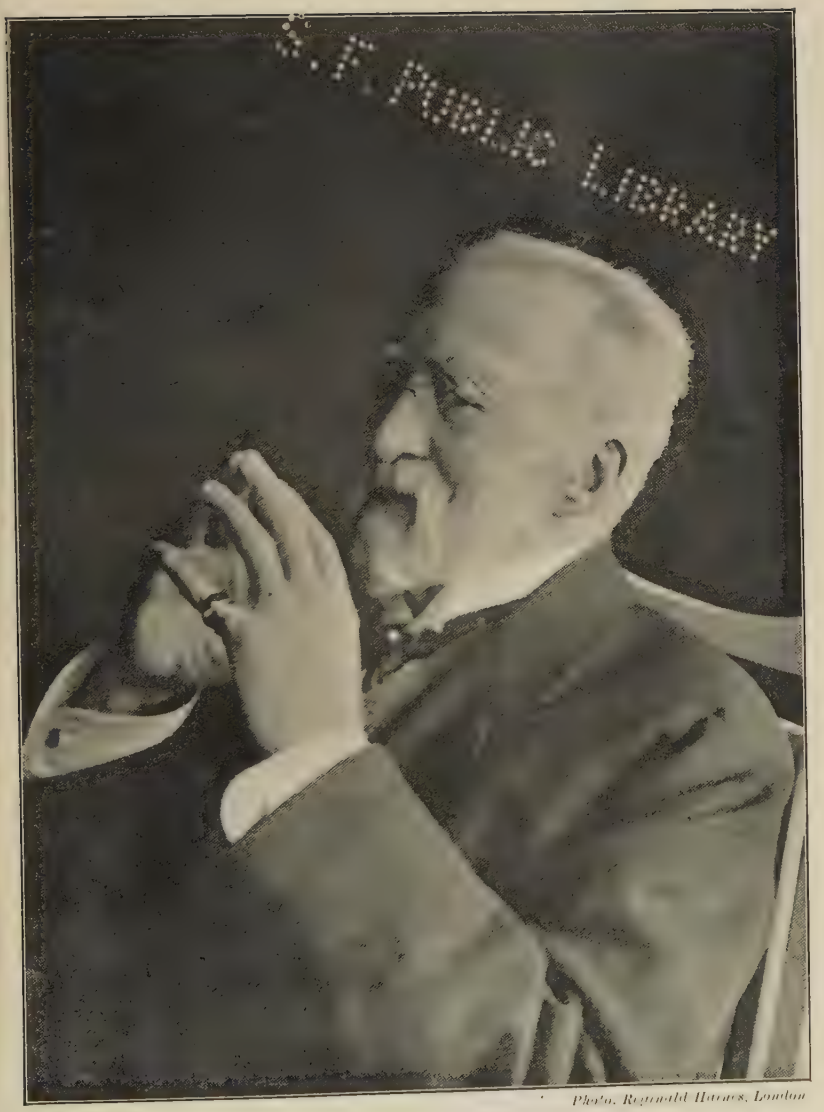

Photo. Reginald Haines, London

To R. M Sneed
from her affectionate friend and
literary colleague
Justin McCarthy

'We have had terrible weather—most furious snow-storms and then a thaw which drenched the whole region in a deluge of muddy water . . . my eyes are very weak, and I am looking out with longing hope for the projected operation. How I wish you and I could meet more often and talk things over! . . .' Folkestone, Jan. 3, '09.

'. . . I am sending you a copy of the *Cork Examiner* containing a long article on me and my doings. . . . I welcome if for the memories it brings up of the dear old city where I was born.

'I am suffering a little from my old familiar, far too familiar "melancholia." It is really a sort of physical ailment. We lead a lonely life here and I am compelled to be habitually inactive. . . . I can write no more just now—I wonder if you can read this. . . .' Mar. 21.

'I send you, dear colleague, this scrap-note to tell you that we have taken a new house unfurnished in Folkestone, into which we are already moving much of our old furniture from Herdholt. The new home is 67 Cheriton Road, Folkestone. . . . We are all deeply grieved by the death of George Meredith.' May 3.

'Your letter was a source of genuine delight to me, for it told me so much about you, about yourself, your very self and all that you have been seeing and doing and wanting to see and do. How thoroughly I wish with you that we were doing some literary work together again. Perhaps such combination may come again if we should ever live in the same region of town or country again. . . . I hope that we shall contrive a meeting somewhere and somehow before you go abroad, for at my time of life and in such a state of health, I begin to have a very self-limiting future. I well know however that I shall never change in my affection for you.' July 4, '09.

'Your sweet picture post-card, dearest colleague, is one of the most beautiful and artistic things of the kind I have seen.[1] The lights and shadows, the sun, the skies and the sunlit waters are living. It now adorns and shall adorn my study.' Dec. 14, '09.

'The late year in its close, dear colleague, bequeathed me my seventy-ninth birthday, the 22nd of November, so that I am now making my way towards my eightieth year. I must put up with it patiently—there is nothing to be done. I am 67 Cheriton Rd., Folkestone, Jan. 8. 1910.

[1] The picture was sent from Cannes.

striving to make myself a philosophic waiter for the event it very distinctly announces.'

Feb. 3, 1910. 'Your letter was as a stream of sunlight to my heart and mind. I have some news about myself, good on the whole but partly qualified, to give you in return. I have just had a long consultation with the eminent Folkestone oculist, Dr. Menzies, and he tells me definitely that I do not need and am not to have any further operation to my eyes, but that I must for some time to come avoid as much as possible reading and writing—must be read to and dictate my correspondence. I think it right to let you know this, ever dearest colleague, but I should indeed be grieved at such a time to lose the comfort of your companionship through letters, as I cannot have it otherwise.'

Yet still, after this, come many scrap-notes in the familiar handwriting—tremulous, blotted—a few lines on the page of note-paper. There is always the same cry: 'How I wish I could write you a long, full, living letter!' It is impossible to quote from all these. I give only brief extracts.

Feb. 22, '10. 'Delighted to get your letter and to learn something of your movements. You are lucky to be out of our climate of drenching rain and blinding mist. I read your letter with ease, but may not write more just now.'

Mar. 3, '10. 'Just a few lines to let you know that I still live, as a pressure of the hand might do if I were nearer. I am fairly well.'

Mar. 16, '10. 'I delight to hear all about your movements. That quotation comes from "Antony and Cleopatra." It is spoken by *Octavius Cæsar* to his sister *Octavia:*

"The elements be kind to thee and make
Thy spirits all of comfort"—

I say the same to you.'

April 4, '10. 'Charlotte has been reading "Mademoiselle Aissé" to me. . . . We send you heartfelt congratulations.'

'. . . I am deeply interested of course in the great political troubles now going on, and the struggle of my dear, old friend John Redmond on behalf of his countrymen. . . .'

That year I broke my journey home from abroad at Folkestone in order to spend a few hours with Mr. McCarthy and his family. He writes to me afterwards :

'. . . Only a few words, dearest colleague, to tell you, although already you know it well, what a heartfelt delight your visit gave me and how I treasure your beautiful little gift. I mean to write you by dictation a much longer letter soon, but now I feel that I can only write from my own heart by my own hand. . . . these few stinted, hardly legible lines—hardly legible even by me as I dimly write them.'

This is the last letter written to me by his own hand :

'Just a line or two from my own heart and hand, dearest colleague, to let you know that I am still as close to you in heart as ever. I shall send you a dictated letter soon and give you a full account of my movements, but this is all for the moment.
'Charlotte sends her love.' Oct. 19, 1910.

I do not attempt to quote from all the letters dictated to his secretary—reports of his work and doings sent to me in the winters of the last three years of his life, which I spent abroad. Only from the last one I ever received from my dear, old friend with its pathetically illegible signature telling too plainly of the fading sight so soon to be quenched for ever, I take these lines, for in truth, they seem to be a fitting close to a literary collaboration and friendship which must remain with me till the end of my life as one of its deepest satisfactions, and happiest memories.

'Ever dearest Colleague,—
'Your most welcome letter just received from Mentone has given me the most thorough delight I have had for many a long day, and sends a stream of sunshine through many physical infirmities, among which the increasing defects of eyesight form the most distressing. It was a genuine happiness to me to find myself still held in your memory with the friendship and affection of the dear old days when we were still working colleagues in literature and especially in romance. 67 Cheriton Rd., Folkestone, Nov 14, 1911.

I have never had such another literary colleague and companion as you, and I have now left my eightieth birthday many months behind. . . .'

The end seemed to me to come suddenly—the end of the long retrospect. I had heard nothing from my literary colleague for many weeks. I myself had been laid up with influenza in the early part of 1912, and no answer had come to the word or two of post-card greeting I had sent from Mentone.

In April, when I was at the Hôtel Californie in Cannes, the day before my departure for England, I read almost by chance, in the newspaper, a paragraph announcing the death of Justin McCarthy.

* * * * * * *

He had been greatly associated in my mind with Cannes. As I left the 'Californie' and looked forth at the Grasse hills: and when I, too, made my retrospect while the train rushed through the red gorges of the Esterels, I knew that I had left a long chapter of my life closed behind me.

* * * * * * *

His daughter has given me some particulars of the latter weeks of his life. In the late summer of 1911 the final change began. He now showed more than before the great age at which he had arrived. Physically he grew weaker: his sight became still worse, and at times, his memory failed him. He recovered to a certain extent, however, from a gastric attack in the November of that year, just after the last letter he ever wrote me, and was able to go out occasionally in his bath-chair. But on April 20, 1912, it became evident that the end was near. On Tuesday the 23rd he received Extreme Unction, and on Wednesday morning, the last Sacraments of his Church. A wild wind was raging and moaning—I

asked his daughter if the family legend of the Banshee had been fulfilled, but she could only tell me of that strange wild wind, which happily, did not seem to disturb him. He remarked on the brightness of the day, and said that he felt quite well and quite happy.

In the afternoon, he fell into unconsciousness, and passed peacefully to his rest a few minutes before 8 o'clock in the evening.

They buried him at Highgate beside his wife; and I, journeying homeward in that hour, and reading in some English papers we had bought at Cannes station, the obituary notices of Justin McCarthy—which in truth it seemed to me did but scant justice to the great soul that had departed—mourned that I might not even cast a flower on my dead comrade's grave.

Here now, I lay my wreath of immortelles.

APPENDIX

I AM permitted by the writer, with the courteous consent of the editor of *The Academy*, to quote the following beautiful description of the funeral of Justin McCarthy, from an article by Mr. Arthur Machen, which appeared in that journal on May 4, 1912.

'TO THE MEMORY OF JUSTIN MCCARTHY

'. . . Last Saturday I stood in a shining field on the northern borders of London. Shining was it in the light of the sun, for though in the morning all the sky was grey with clouds and vexed with a cold wind, as the hours wore on there came a light that shone and pierced through the sad mists and dissolved them, and when noon was passed all the dome that is above the world was a faery blue, and the sun glittered: the great primrose fire of spring. There are skies that deepen into violet in the regions of the South, where a flaming, burning sunlight glows on the white rocks of Provence, in the land where the cicada calls from the dark pines, odorous as incense in the fierce heat of the heavens: but over that garth in northern London the sky was delicate and pure and mystical, glimmering in its radiance as if it were seen through faintest, whitest veils.

'All round me was a place of tender, springing leaves, of sweet shades of opening green: and the song of a bird rose in the clear air, like a chant of joy and great thanksgiving.

'Upon these silver notes beat the summons of a bell: again and again it was repeated, and as the harsh tolling and the bird's song rose together, I looked and there came a grave pomp towards the place where I was standing. First a boy in black and white lifted up a glittering cross: behind him

a figure clad in a cloak also of black and white, whose lips moved incessantly : the faint murmur of words in an old tongue came across the stillness. On the one side of this figure walked one who bore a vessel of pure water, on the other a youth carried fire and frankincense : and here, after the teaching of Pater, I found the natural things of the earth exalted : common water and common spices raised, as it were, to their highest power : no longer common, but serving as symbols of eternal mysteries. And behind these sacred ministers came the flower-laden coffin and the mourners : they were bringing the body of Justin McCarthy to its place of rest beside his wife.

'*Ne intres in judicium servo tuo, Domine.*

'The priest in his cope and stole of black and silver stood at the head of the open grave, and began to utter in sonorous and solemn Latin the last supplications for the dead. I heard him marshalling the host of heaven in aid of the departed soul : with a reiterated summons he bade the chorus of the angels and the archangels come to the assistance of him who had passed through the deep waters of death. With them the martyrs in their dyed robes, with them the shining saints, all who had come through great tribulation and had obtained the white vestments of immortality : all were gathered by the invocation of this final rite to be the sponsors and patrons of the dead in the courts of the undying.

'The blue incense smoke rose into the sunlight : the holy water was sprinkled into the darkness of the grave : the last *requiescat* was uttered, and Justin McCarthy's body was committed to the earth *sub signo crucis*.'

INDEX

Aberdeen, Lord, 31
Acton, Lord, 'the best educated man in England,' 118
Æschylus, 421
Alexander, Bishop, 129
Algiers, Justin McCarthy's descriptions of, 168, 170
Alligator, a young, on the dinner-table, 307
Allingham, William, 199
Almayer's Folly, a novel by Joseph Conrad, 400
Amber Witch, The, 338
Anarchists, the imprisoned (at Chicago), 79, 81
An Author's Love, the authorship of, 181
Anna Karenina, 153
Anne, The Reign of Queen, 428, 430
Antony and Cleopatra, quoted, 444
Appleton, Mr., a lecture agent, 106
Appointments, foreign and colonial, 408, 409
Armenian Political Mission, an, 218
Arun-Arbor, the 'New Padua' of *Dear Lady Disdain*, 77
Ashburnham, Lord, 33, 36, 39, 155, 193, 194
Asquith, Mr., 279, 330
Austria, The Empress of, refuses birthday congratulations, 333

Baker, Dr. Grenfell, 232
Balfour, Mr., 205, 366, 369, 395, 406, 407, 431
Bancroft, Sir Squire, quoted, 85, 229
Banshee, The, a story by Justin McCarthy, 'not wholly fanciful,' 374
Barlow, George, 163; on Irving's acting, 335
Barth, Dr., a member of the German Parliament, 412
Bartlett, Sir E. Ashmead, 326
Bauble Shop, The, a play by H. A. Jones, 350, 351, 367
Bayard, Mr., 379
Beere, Mrs. Bernard, in *La Tosca*, 204
Bell, Moberly, 374
Ben Hur, 82
Bencke, Emil, 43
Bentley, Mr., fears to publish *The Rebel Rose*, 51, 146, 148, 153; death of, 400
Béranger quoted, 416, 417
Beresford, Lord Charles, entertains Buffalo Bill, 103, 410
Bernhardt, Sarah, 156, 433
Besant, Sir Walter, 399
Biggar, Joseph, 112, 219
Binbian Jo, a novel, afterwards published as *The Ladies' Gallery*, 130, 141, 250, 359
Birthday Honours, 399
Biskra, 212
Black, William, death of, 426
Black and White, the starting of, 193, 228, 233, 244, 282
Blake, Edward, 67; in an election, 323, 324, 325, 328, 340; wishes to resign from Nationalist Committee, 343, 349, 354; hopeless about Home Rule Bill, 362, 377, 395, 410
Blavatsky, Madame, 85
Blue Spectacles, a story by Justin McCarthy, 279
Book of Memories, The, 5, 7, 70, 331, 422
Boston, 62

Boulanger, General, 191, 192
Boulogne negotiations, the, 274
Bournemouth, 144
Bowen, Sir George, 185, 191, 192, 304, 426
Bradfield College, the Greek play at, 318
Brandt, Dr., 244
Brazil, the Emperor of, 198, 289
Bright, Jacob, a true friend of Ireland, 121
Bright, John: Justin McCarthy's rejoinder to, 18; death, and McCarthy's tribute, 179; 187; memorial statue, 290
Broome, Sir Frederick, 220
Broughton, Rhoda, 172, 276
Brown, Ford Madox, 165
Browning, Robert, death of, 229
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James, against the Nationalists, 340
Buchanan, Robert, a combat with George Moore, 202
'Buffalo Bill,' 103, 108, 198
Buller, General Sir Redvers, 374
Bulwer, Sir Henry, 337
Burton, Sir Richard and Lady, 217, 232, 251
Byrne, Frank, 99, 155
Byron, Lord, quoted by Mr. Gladstone, 178

Caird, Mrs. Mona, 221, 232
Camiola, 13, 18, 39, 235
Campbell, Lady Colin, 75, 277
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir Henry, 396
Cannes, 198, 199, 207, 287
Carew, Mr., 213, 248
Carey, James, the arrest of, 98
Carmichael, Sir James, 126
Carnarvon, Lord, 10, 12, 16, 28
Carnarvon election, 1890, 237
'Carnarvon Incident,' the, 11, 138, 265
Carrington, Earl, 291
Catholic Church, the, 133, 134
Cavendish, Lord Edward, 292
Cervantes, 234
Ceylon, Mrs. Praed in, 385
Chamberlain, Dora, 367
Chamberlain, Joseph, 24, 25, 33, 40, 88, 95, 97, 99, 205, 395
Chatto, Andrew, 31, 32, 211, 253, 281, 285, 408
Chester House, 7, 246
Childers, the Right Hon. Hugh, 15, 176
Churchill, Lord Randolph, 12, 24, 28, 118, 120, 148, 216, 225, 232, 279, 351, 390, 391
Clarence, the Duke of, 307
Classical writers, 421
Cleveland, President, 81, 82, 360
Clive, General, 172
Cobden, Richard, quoted, 409
Coercion Bill, the, 103, 108
Coffin, Hayden, 197
Coleridge, Lord, 253
Collaboration of Mrs. Praed with Justin McCarthy, 7; the first book, 9; a criticism in *Le Figaro*, 251; a comment, 402; an anniversary, 428
Collins, General, 360; a dinner to, 364; a dinner given by, 379
Compton, Lord William, 109
Conrad, Joseph, a novel by, 400
Contemporary Review, an article for the, 337
Cook, Sir E. T., appointed editor of the *Daily News*, 407
Cooper, Charles, editor of the *Scotsman*, 138
Cope, Mr., a friend and neighbour of Justin McCarthy, 429
Cork election after Parnell's downfall, 271
Cork Examiner, an article on Justin McCarthy in the, 443
Couperus, Louis, a novel by, 390
Courtney, Lord, 393, 395
Coutts' Bank action against Justin McCarthy, 254, 283
Cowan, Joseph, 34
Craigie, Mrs. (John Oliver Hobbes), 361
Crawford, Mrs., 159
Crimes Bill, the, 111, 116, 177
Croke, Dr., Archbishop of Cashel, opposition to Parnell, 262
Curzon, Lord, 88

Daily Graphic artist in Justin McCarthy's study, 268; an interview published in the, 436
Daily News, the, 12, 16, 20, 23, 104, 105, 156, 166, 182, 190, 191, 204, 210, 228, 269, 285, 293, 307, 310, 313, 318, 319, 325, 336, 337, 340,

341, 345, 352, 355, 369, 380, 383, 390, 407, 408, 412
Dalhousie, the death of Lord and Lady, 139
Daly, Augustin, 161, 379
Davitt, Michael, 95, 330, 342, 407, 408
Dead Heart, The (Charles Gibbon's play), 229
Dear Lady Disdain, a novel by Justin McCarthy, 77, 371
Deasy, Mr., a member of the Irish Party, 269
De Fonblanque, M., 318, 400
Dekker's *Roaring Girl*, 180
Deland, Margaret, comments on books by, 172, 198
Demosthenes, 423
Desborough, Lord, 234
Dictator, The, a novel by Justin McCarthy, 305, 316, 317, 350, 364, 377
Dilke, Sir Charles, and Ireland, 97, 99, 165, 283, 327
Dillon, John, 88, 96, 100, 103, 112, 128, 129, 133, 138, 244, 274, 278, 279, 280, 296, 298, 309, 314, 323, 330, 337, 340, 348, 354, 359, 362, 373, 407, 408, 412, 428
Dining-rooms at the House of Commons, 361, 362
Diprose, Mr., 299
Disraeli, novels by, 110; statue of, 186; quoted, 225
Dissension in the Nationalist Party, 328
Doe, William, author of a translation from Béranger, 417
Domitian, 423
Donelly, Ignatius, 186
Donna Quixote, a novel by Justin McCarthy; suggested dramatisation, 217, 371
Duchess of Malfi, Justin McCarthy's 'talk' on the, 198, 199
Dufferin, Lady, 277
Dufferin, Lord, 183
Duffy, Sir Charles Gavan, 381
Du Maurier, George, 279
Du Maurier, Gerald, 340
Dunnington-Jefferson, Mr. and Mrs., 299
Dunraven, Lord, a meeting on behalf of East-End women workers, 217
Dynamite Outrage, the Dublin, 342
Edna Lyall (Miss Bayly), 359
Edward VII, King, 118; his advice to the Duke of Teck, 159, 192, 216, 225
Egan, Patrick, 299
Election, the General, of 1895, 401
Elections of 1892, the, 322
Emmet, Dr., President of the American Home Rule Federation, 383
Empire music-hall, a visit to the, 342
Englefield, Admiral, 307, 340
Englefield, Sir Edward, an alligator belonging to, 307
Englefield, Mrs., 360
Esmond, Justin McCarthy's delight in, 139; quoted 209
Esmonde, Sir Thomas, 291
Esoteric Buddhism, 85
Esther Vanhomrigh, a novel by Mrs. Woods, 335
l'Etui de Nacre, a book by Anatole France, 335
Euripides, 421

Fairchild, the Rev. Dr., 72
Faithfull, Emily, death of, 400
Fantastics, the, 85
Fellow's Love Story, A, a story by Justin McCarthy, 418
Fenians, the, 95
Field, Cyrus, 61
Field, Mrs., 82
Figaro, a criticism on the collaboration, 251
Fitzmaurice, Lord and Lady Edmond, 318, 349
'Fitzurseham,' Justin McCarthy's name for a part of Battersea, 39, 40
Florida Days, 198
Folkestone, a visit to, 236
Forbes, the Hon. Mrs. Walter, recollections of Justin McCarthy, 187; uses the plot of *The Shooting Star* for her novel *A Gentleman*, 197; a dinner party, 269, 344; tea on the Terrace, 363
Forfar, the election of 1894, 389
Foster, Sir Walter, 143
Fowler, Sir Henry, 216; on Home Rule, 340
Fowler, Sir Robert, 'a friendly, genial Tory,' 293
France, Anatole, 335

Francillon, Mrs., 173
Frederic, Harold, *Illumination*, 412
Freeman's Journal, Justin McCarthy offered post of managing director of, 150; a paper to oppose, 268; a quarrel over an amalgamation, 314; the quarrel continues, 354; reception of the Gladstone-Tweedmouth contributions, 383
Froude, J. A., on Home Rule, 225, 227, 228, 304
Fry, Theodore, 291

Gardner, Herbert, 234
Gardner, Richardson, 233
Gawthorpe Hall, 136
Geary, Major, 100
Genoa, 236
George, Henry, 98
Georges, The Four, Justin McCarthy's history of, 23, 32, 186, 194, 196, 211, 220, 222, 285, 333, 337, 344, 408
Gissing, George, novels by, 298, 300, 390
Gladstone, Mr., 4, 11, 23, 28, 31, 32, 33, 47; breakfast parties, 85; 88, 89, 92, 94; plot to assassinate, 98; on Parnell and *The Times*, 102; speech on amendment to the Coercion Bill, 103; speech on Parnell, 104; speech in favour of committee of investigation, 106; offered £200 for an article of three pages, 108; possible effect upon of McCarthy's resignation, 115; view of Tanner-Long dispute, 119; Lord Rosebery on Gladstone's 'wood-selling line,' 138; a Radical speech, 151; 166; speech on the Crimes Bill, 177; on the authorship of *An Author's Love*, 181; Justin McCarthy's *Life* of, 191; a remark concerning Mrs. Praed, 192; another *Life*, 194; praises *The Grey River*, 204; a spirited fighting motion on Irish affairs, 221; to open the debate on the Parnell Commission, 224; withdraws support from Parnell, 254; Justin McCarthy's interviews with, regarding Parnell-O'Shea divorce, 258; discussion of Parnell's manifesto, 261; refuses to treat with Parnell or the members of the Irish Party, 264, 265, 275; 278, 286; sceptical of fortune-tellers, 289; on Home Rule chances, 289, 290; 318; a small majority and the Second Home Rule Bill, 323; a satisfactory talk on Home Rule, 325; a 'really beautiful and touching speech,' 326; his probable course regarding the Home Rule Bill, 329; 332; difficulties with the Irish Party, 339; suggestion that the Nationalists should sit with Government, 348, 349; fighting Tory obstruction, 353; postpones second reading of second Home Rule Bill, 354; speech introducing the second reading, 358; 362; on the 'row' in the House, 365; 366; passing of the Bill through the Commons, 372; resignation, 373; interview with Justin McCarthy after the resignation, 376; contribution towards expenses of Irish Party, 383; a book on *The Story of Mr. Gladstone's Life* undertaken by Justin McCarthy, 410; letter about *The Life of the Pope*, 411; his last speech in the House of Commons, 425; the monument to, 433
Gladstone, Mrs., a letter from, 350
Gladstone, Mr. and Mrs. Henry, 291
Gladstone, Herbert (now Lord), 25, 99; a libel action, 213; jointly responsible with three others for debts of Irish Exhibition, 242; 279
Goethe, 296, 423
Goncourt, Edmond de, 333
Gould, Nutcombe, 243
Govan election of 1889, the, 172
Gower, Lord Ronald Sutherland, 173
Grahame, Mrs. Kenneth, 217, 218
Gray, Mr., manager of the *Freeman's Journal*, 290
Greece, 415
Grey, Sir Edward, 384
Grey River, The, occasion of a collaboration between Mrs. Praed, Justin McCarthy, and Mr. Menpes, 180, 184, 190, 194, 196, 203, 218, 235, 288, 298, 393, 396
'Grouse,' Parnell's red setter, 21
Gully, Mr. Speaker, 395

Hale, Dr., 411
Hamley, General, 226
Harcourt, Sir William, 90, 96; defends Parnell, 104, 129, 148; on Pigott's flight, 175, 256; will not treat with Parnell or with members of Irish Party, 265; possible attitude to Home Rule, 331; against the Nationalists, 340; in despair, 353; in charge of the House, 354; 369; as successor to Mr. Gladstone, 375, 376; 395; 'riding for a fall,' 398
Harcourt, The Rt. Hon. Lewis, 234
Hardy, Thomas, a rumoured collaboration, 402
Hart, Ernest, 242
Hartington, Lord, 28, 40, 100, 216, 290
Hastings, Lady Elizabeth, Steele's remark upon, 128
Havelaar, Max, a Dutch novelist, 392
Hawkins, Anthony Hope, 413
Hawthorne, Nathaniel, 64, 65
Healy, Mrs. Maurice, 293
Healy, T. M., 20, 50, 96, 112, 133, 139, 383
Heaton, Dr., 437
Hemming, Lady, 215
Hennessy, Sir J. P. and Lady, 120, 212, 244, 302
Henniker, Mrs., 402
'Herdholt,' 432
Herodotus, a lecture on, 389
Herring, Mrs., 432
Herschell, Lord, on Parnell and *The Times*, 103; on Home Rule, 340
Higginson, Colonel, 69
Hill, Lord Arthur, 219, 242, 248
Hill, Frank, dismissed from the *Daily News*, 104
Hochstetter, 'Bobby,' 344
Holmes, Oliver Wendell, 70
Home Rule, 2, 10, 12, 16, 22, 28; Canadian feeling, 94, 287
Home Rule Bill of 1886 defeated, 40
Home Rule Bill, the second, 265, 280, 323, 329, 347, 354, 357–370
Homer, 423
Hong-Kong, the harbour of, 387
Horace, 423
Houghton, Lord: his breakfast parties and his kindness, 85
House of Commons: right of feminine entry, 3
How to Make a Saint, 109
Hueffer, Franz, 173
Hundred of Great Britain, The, a photograph for, 384
Huxley, T. H., 'always worth listening to,' 123

Iddesleigh, the Earl of, 73
Illumination, a novel by Harold Frederic, 412
Impressions of the Eighties, a book never written, 422
In the Year of Jubilee, a novel by George Gissing, 390
Inderwick, Charles, Q.C., 333
Interviewers, American, 56, 387
Irene, Dr. Johnson's, 192
Irish Cattle, a scheme to raise, 215
Irish Celts a Southern Race, 203
Irish Exhibition, the, 169, 219, 229, 299, 371
Irish in America, the, 407
Irish Local Government Bill, a speech on, 311
Irish National Land League, the, 97
Irish Party Finances, contributions from overseas, 322
Irving, Sir Henry, 229, 243; criticised in the *New Review*, 335; knighted, 399
Irving, H. B., 436

Jackson, Miss Washington, 380
James, Sir Henry, 176, 366
James Vraile, a novel by J. C. Jeffery, 220
Jameson, Major, 322, 333, 334, 335
Jameson, Violet, a letter from, 335
Japan, Mrs. Praed in, 387
Jefferies, Richard, *The Story of My Heart*, 130
Jennings, Louis, 205
Jerome, Jerome K., a play by, 218
Jeune, Lady (Lady St. Helier), 17, 39, 43, 86, 148, 198, 222, 224, 226, 340
Jeune, Sir Francis (Lord St. Helier), 432
John Ward, Preacher, 172
Jones, Henry Arthur, plays by, 194, 350, 367
Jopling, Mrs., 197, 233
Jubilee, the, 111, 112
Julian Revelstone, a novel by Justin McCarthy, 436

Kandy, Mrs. Praed in, 385, 389
Kendal, Mrs., 164
Kennard, Coleridge, 98
Kennard, Mrs. Coleridge, 318
Kennard, Mr. & Mrs. Edward, 258
Kettner's, a dinner at, 299
Kilkenny, an anti-Parnellite victory at, 272
Kimberley, Lord, on Home Rule, 340
King Lear at the Lyceum, 333; the play quoted, 366
Kipling, Rudyard, 213, 237
Knight, Joseph, 163
Knowles, James, an evening party, 118
Krapotkine, Prince, 35

Labouchere, Henry, on Mr. Chamberlain, 28, 51, 105; a Shakespearean performance, 122; 126; witnesses bloodshed at Michelstown, 129; witnesses Pigott's confession, 175; 'go in and get your cheer,' 187; 205; will not accept Lord Salisbury's word, 223; 256; furious at his omission from the Government, 327; his revolt, 337
Ladies' Gallery, The (see *The Rebel Rose*)
Lamb, Miss Beatrice, 163
Lambart, Alfred, 397
Land Bill, the, 117, 118, 120
Landon, Major, 36
Landor, Savage, an eminent traveller, 345, 347
Lang, Andrew, 105
Langtry, Mrs., 222
Last Words, a play in which Ada Rehan appeared, 301
La Tosca, a performance of, 204
Lea, Marion, 243
Lecky, W. E. H., on Home Rule, 225; 310
Leo XIII, Pope, a biography of, 393, 408, 411
Lethbridge, Sir Roper, dinner to Indian Civil Servants, 225
Lewis, Sir George, 160, 164
Linley Rochford, Justin McCarthy's, 161
Linton, Mrs. Lynn, 277; a letter from, 314
Linton, Sir James, 216
Locker-Lampson, Frederick, 400
Lockwood, Sir Frank, 176, 333
Londonderry, Lady, 224
Londonderry elections, 25, 128
Long, the Rt. Hon. Walter, 119
Lowell, James Russell, quoted, 208
Lucian, 421
Lucretius, 423
Lucy, Sir Henry, 28; made editor of *Daily News*, 105
Lugano, 411

Macaulay quoted, 183
McCarthy, James, 133
McCarthy, Justin: first meeting with Mrs. Praed, 1; political career, 2; attitude towards women, 4–5; an all-round scholar, 6; 'pools of melancholy,' 9; as 'stern critic,' 14; a conference on education, 15; 'wait till you come to forty years,' 17; rejoinder to John Bright's speech on 'rebels,' 18; American offers, 21; his Irish campaign (1885), 22; Londonderry and Longford elections, 25; negotiations with Parnell regarding a Home Rule bill, 29; a talk with Lord Morley about Home Rule, 33; a young admirer, 35; visit to Lord Ashburnham, 36; urgent summons to Ireland, 41; voice training, 43; discussion of Irish affairs with Lord Morley and Parnell, 45–48; election petition, 48; American tour, 51; farewell dinner given by members of the Irish Party, 52; descriptions of Atlantic extracted from notebook, 54; interviewers in New York, 56; first American lecture, 60; Boston lecture, 62; banquet at Boston, 64; Canadian lectures, 65; Canadian impressions, 66; address to the Nineteenth Century Club, 68; Canadian landscape, 72; conflict between Irish and American associations, 73; puffery, 78; parliamentary sketches for the *Youth's Companion*, 79; visit to President Cleveland, 81–82; visit to O. W. Holmes, 82; political argument with a lady, 90; 'Parnellism and Crime,' 91, 92; on the Fenians, 95; action regarding plot against Gladstone, 98; debate on Parnell, 104; resignation from the *Daily News*, 105; invited to a place on committee for Jubilee

ceremonies, 107; talk with Gladstone on a proposed article, 108; sight of Parnell in the House, 108; at Stratford-on-Avon, 109; a dinner at Lord Ripon's, 111; attitude towards Queen Victoria, 111; urged to resign his position in Irish Party, 113; proposes Mr. Gladstone's health, 120; interviews with Charles Villiers and Cardinal Manning, 121; visit to Paris, 123; 'North Hunts relies on me,' 125; dinners 'below stairs,' 126, 127; at Londonderry, 128; a staunch Catholic, 133; obituary notice of the Crown Prince of Germany, 137; on the imprisonment of William O'Brien, 138; a walk and talk with Lord Rosebery, 138; a lecture on 'The House of Commons,' 139; at Hereford and Cardiff, 140; invited to become a Deputy-Chairman, 146; as a Royal Commissioner, 147; offered the post of managing-director of the *Freeman's Journal*, 150; the offer refused and reasons given, 152; the description of a coffee-palace, 154; action in regard to 'Parnellism and Crime,' 157; in Algiers, 168; speech on the death of John Bright, 179; unable to get into the Parnell meeting, 182; 'go in and get your cheer,' 187; recollections of, by the Hon. Mrs. Walter Forbes, 187; anecdote of Lord Salisbury, 189; two biographies of Gladstone, 191 and 194; a *Life* of Peel, 195; *Thirty Years in London*, 195; visit to Cannes, 207; on the climate of Algiers, 214; financial anxiety, 215, 219; talk with Froude on Home Rule, 225; a rush to Edinburgh, 226; on the Bright Memorial Committee, 227; lawsuits over the Irish Exhibition, 229; in a curious mood, 231; a vision of 'the grey river,' 235; speeches about Shakespeare, 241; responsible for debts of Irish Exhibition, 242; lecture on 'The Real and the Ideal in Fiction,' 242; ordered to the Baths of Royat, 244; 'I am feeling immensely well,' 249; a sensation story, 250, 251; presides at a meeting of the Irish Party, 252; success in an action concerning Irish Exhibition, 254; lecture at the Sunday Evening Association, 254; interviews with Gladstone about Parnell-O'Shea divorce case, 258, 261; Parnell's vehement challenge to, 262; describes Nationalist meeting ending in deposition of Parnell, 263; leader of the Irish party, 267; good-will of the House of Commons, 269; viewing life from the 'upper boxes,' 270; Cork election, 271; negotiations at Boulogne with Dillon and O'Brien, 274; speech at Liverpool, 277; meeting with Parnell, 278; possibility of conflict with Parnell in the House, 282; literary work and speech-making, 285; a visit to Cannes, 287; influenza, 291; at Bournemouth, 296; the Irish Exhibition again, 299; pot-boiling, 300; a long talk with Parnell, 300; kissed by Ada Rehan, 301; the news of Parnell's death, 302; a magnificent offer, 303; a house at Westgate, 304; desire for retirement, 305; a speech on the Irish Local Government Bill, 311; cold and rheumatism, 313; trouble in the Irish Party, 314; very weak and ill, 316, 317; at Woodlands, 320; a leader on a speech by Gladstone, 321; a strange experience, 321; asked for his autograph, 322; a satisfactory talk with Mr. Gladstone, 325; distressed by Nationalist dissensions, 328; Irish negotiations, 330; a *Pall Mall Gazette* canard, 336; trouble over the Paris funds, 337, 338; at Hengler's circus, 338; a hard winter, 340, 346; a lecture at Shepherd's Bush, 348; six articles on *Personal Memories of Famous Americans*, 353; disappointed about postponement of Home Rule Bill, 354; a speech at a disadvantage, 356; a daily walk by doctor's orders, 358; to Westgate again, 360; dining arrangements at the House, 361; speeches at National Liberal and Cobden Clubs, 364; a 'row' in the House,

365; oppressive literary obligations, 367; 'the respectable age of sixty-three,' 369; increased melancholy, 370; loyalty to Parnell, 372; the slow growth of discouragement, 373; the Banshee, 374; interview with Mr. Gladstone, after the G.O.M.'s resignation, 376; at the St. Patrick's dinner, 377; responsibilities, 378; at the annual convention of the Irish National League, 379; recollections of early days in Liverpool, 379; a crisis with the Evicted Tenants Bill, 381; at Herne Bay, 382; photographed for *The Hundred of Great Britain*, 384; a lecture to Mrs. Jopling's students, 389; contributions to *Statesmen of the Day*, and *Tales of the Century*, 393; a dinner at the Press Club, 397; the lot of the Nationalist Members, 401; a manifesto to the Irish people, and a slackening of activity, 404; impending resignation, 405; press discovery of the secret, 406; a book on *The Story of Mr. Gladstone's Life*, 410; Mr. Gladstone's letter on the *Life of the Pope*, 411; a week in Dublin, 413; a complete break-down, 415; thoughts of his life and of the mistakes he had made, 415; a Greek in spirit, 416; his dreams, 418; love of the sea, 419; literary work of his later years, 420; an essay on *My Old Schoolmaster in Cork*, 427; *The Reign of Queen Anne*, 428; a pension from the Civil List, 431; invited to write a *History of the World*, 432; 'The Road of Imagination,' 437, 438; waiting for death, 439; removal to Folkestone, 443; 'How I wish I could write you a full, long, living letter,' 444; the last letter, 445; his death, 446

McCarthy, Justin Huntly, 182, 239, 243, 247; a play by, 431

McCarthy, Miss, 168, 182, 213, 216, 232, 246, 316, 319, 321, 334, 351, 352, 358, 360, 366, 415, 442, 444, 445, 446

McCarthy, Mrs. Sallie, 79, 80

Machen, Arthur, a description of Justin McCarthy's funeral by, 448

Mackenzie, General, 340

Madame Sans Gêne, Mme. Réjane in, 381

Mademoiselle Aïssé, a novel by Mrs. Praed, 444

Maeterlinck, Maurice, 420

Mahon, O'Gorman, mentioned in a letter of Peel's, and alive in 1889, 198

Maid of Athens, a novel by Justin McCarthy, 371

Majesty, a novel by Louis Couperus, 390

Mallaby, Mrs., 164

Malleson, Colonel, Lord Gladstone's libel action against, 213

Manners, Lord John, 101

Manning, Cardinal, 121; a presentation to, 244; opposition to Parnell, 262; sanguine of Home Rule's success, 290, 291; death of, 307

Marcus Aurelius, 380

Margate, 166

Marlborough, the Duke of, 205

Marriott, Miss Fanny, 196

Marriott, Sir William, 229

Marston, Philip Bourke, 80

Mary, Queen of Scots, relics of, 126

Mason, Nora, 299

Mathew, Mr. Justice, 242

Matthews, Henry, 118

Matthews, Sir James, 238

Mellor, Rt. Hon. J. W., 253

Menpes, Mortimer, a collaboration with, 180

Mensonges, 185

Meredith, George, comparison between Parnell and the Attorney-General, 184; his death, 443

Merivale, Herman, successful with *The Don*, 147

Middleman, The, by Henry Arthur Jones, 194, 199

Midsummer Night's Dream, A, performance of, 122

Milan, 236, 411

Mill, John Stuart, 308

Mirehouse, Mr., 248, 249

Miss Jacobsen, 41

Modern England in the 'Story of the Nations' series, 421, 424, 425

Modjeska, Madame, 69

Molloy, Fitzgerald, 436

Moloch, a novel by Mrs. Praed, 82

Mononia, a novel by Justin McCarthy, 428

Moondyne, a novel by J. B. O'Reilly, 63, 68, 220
Moonlighting, Lord Morley and Justin McCarthy discuss, 45–46
Moore, George, a combat with Buchanan, 202
Morley, Arnold, on Parnell and *The Times*, 103, 205, 216, 276, 284, 323
Morley, Lord, 31, 33, 34, 35, 44, 45, 90, 101, 103, 155, 158, 182; a dinner to, 199; an Armenian dinner, 218; 252, 254, 256; and Parnell-O'Shea divorce, 258; 275, 277, 282; negotiations with the Irish Party, 332, 337, 339, 340, 342, 348, 349, 352; despondent about Home Rule Bill, 353
Morocco, affairs in, 335, 336
Morris, Sir Lewis, 399
Morris, William, apostrophises March, 223
Morse, Professor, 64, 348
Moulton, Lord Justice Fletcher, his opinion of Justin McCarthy, 6; 217, 218, 227, 230
Mountebanks, The, a comic opera by Gilbert and Cellier, 323
Mrs. Tregaskiss, a novel by Mrs. Praed, 409
Mürger, Henri, the Bohemia of, 187
My Enemy's Daughter, a novel by Justin McCarthy, 235
My Old Schoolmaster in Cork, an essay by Justin McCarthy, 427

Nagasaki, 387
National League of Great Britain, the, 251
National Liberal Club's dinner to Parnell, 117, 119
Nether World, The, a novel by George Gissing, 300
Nettleship, Mr., the oculist, 425
Nevill, Lady Dorothy, 15, 39, 86, 88, 118, 216, 229, 276, 311, 336, 389
New Government of Ireland, The, an article in the *Fortnightly*, 331
New Grub Street, a novel by George Gissing, 298
Newman, Cardinal, an obituary notice, 165; death of, 247
Niebuhr, 423
Nineteenth Century Club, Justin McCarthy's address to the, 68
Norfolk, the Duke of, 411
Norreys, Miss, 122
North American Review, an article for the, 367, 369
North St. Pancras election (1890), 221, 224
Northwick election result (1887), 126
Notebooks, the principle of, 53
Notre Dame d'Afrique, the Church of, 174
Novikoff, Madame, 359

O'Brien, William, 133, 137, 148, 244, 271, 272, 274, 278, 279, 280, 296, 297, 314, 379, 407
O'Connell, Daniel, a biography of, 367
O'Connor, Arthur, and O'Shea's candidature, 112; sent to Paris to stop issue of funds, 268
O'Connor, T. P., 89, 148, 158, 317, 361, 373, 408
O'Connor, Mrs. T. P., 16
O'Donnell action, the, 154
Old Berris of Boggo Creek, a story by Mrs. Praed, 436
Oliphant, Laurence, 77, 169
Olivia, at the Lyceum Theatre, 22
On the Face of the Waters, a novel by Mrs. F. A. Steel, 414
Orczy, Baroness, 436
O'Reilly, John Boyle, 63, 68, 82, 220; death of, 247, 251, 360
Orford, Lord, 33, 389
Ortmans, Mr., editor of *Cosmopolis*, 412
O'Shea, Captain, 98, opposition to his candidature, 112; action for divorce, with Parnell as co-respondent, 208, 219
Ouida, 77
Our Own Times, The History of, 25, 118, 371, 408, 413, 414, 415, 421, 431, 433
Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, 429

Pall Mall Budget, The, 389
Pall Mall Gazette, The, and Gladstone's repudiation of Parnell, 259; invites opinions of novelists on the drama, 325; makes an inaccurate assertion, 336
Papyrus Club, the, 71
Paris, Justin McCarthy's visit in 1887, 123, 124

Paris Funds, Arthur O'Connor sent to stop issue, 268; 297; difficulties with, 337, 338, 380
Parnell, Charles Stewart, 2, 11, 12; as host, 15; dinner in honour of, 20; campaign of 1885, 24; dealings with Labouchere, 29; disappearance, 30; praise of Gladstone's Home Rule speech, 33; 45; interview with Lord Morley, 47; waves his hat, 89; conversation with Sexton and McCarthy about the forged letter in *The Times*, 93; speech denying the charge, 94; 101; divided councils regarding his action against *The Times*, 102; reported death, 107; appearance in the House, 108; implores McCarthy not to resign before the end of the session, 115; National Liberal Club dinner, 117; Irish Land Bill meeting, 117; view of Tanner-Long dispute, 119; Cardinal Manning on, 121; inevitable association with hot-tempered members, 122; Huxley's opinion of, 123; impossible to find, 132; offers Justin McCarthy managing-directorship of *Freeman's Journal*, 150; acceptance of Gladstone's decision, 151; 154; meets Ada Rehan, 156; a special commission granted, 157; 166; collapse of *The Times* case, 175; ovation in House of Commons, 176; the Parnell meeting, 182; Meredith's contrast with the Attorney-General, 184; supports the Royal Grants, 187; his mother, 202; 204, 205; visits Gladstone, 205; as co-respondent, 208, 210; damages from *The Times*, 216; possibility of his marriage to Mrs. O'Shea, 234; a letter about money matters, 237; collapse of the commission, 248; calls a meeting of the Irish Party which he fails to attend, 251; withdrawal of Gladstone's support, 255; manifesto, and Gladstone's criticisms, 261; challenge to Justin McCarthy, 262; deposed from leadership, 263; Cork election, 271; negotiations at Boulogne with Dillon and O'Brien, 274; 278; leaves the House of Commons during a debate, 282; a friendly talk, 291, 298; a long talk with Justin McCarthy, 300; death of Parnell, 302; as leader of the Irish Party, 330, 342, 357; Justin McCarthy's belief in, 372; house at Brighton where Parnell lived, 399
Parnell, Mrs., mother of Charles Parnell, 202
'Parnellism and Crime,' 90, 91, 157, 175
Pater, Walter, 426
Paul, Herbert, 105, 190, 257, 291, 295, 336, 340, 353
Paul, Kegan, death of, 430
Peel, Mr. Speaker, 110, 393, 395
Peel, Sir Robert, a *Life* of, 195; reference to a letter from, 198; 211, 217; early letters, 294
Peel, Sir Robert, the son, 398
Personal Memories of Famous Americans, Justin McCarthy's, 353
Pessimism, artistic, 316
Peterborough election of 1887, the, 126
Phœnix Park murders, the, 92, 95
Picton, Mr., a Radical M.P., 273
Pigott, the censor of plays, 393
Pigott, the forger of Parnell letters, 175
'Plan of Campaign,' the, 309
Plato, 416
Playfair, Sir Lyon, 88
Pliny's *Letters*, 422
Plumtre, Professor, his translations from Æschylus, 421
Pollock, Walter, 32
Poltimore, Lord, 88
Porchester, Lady, 276
Power, 'Dick,' the popular Whip of the Irish Party, 225, 267
Praed, Campbell, 1, 7, 20, 25, 26, 32, 49, 117, 122, 132, 152, 166, 168, 204, 224, 228, 232, 236, 239, 242, 244, 250, 279, 282, 286, 299, 303, 322, 333, 334, 340, 350, 404, 413
Praed, Mrs. Campbell, first meeting with Justin McCarthy, 1; Australian politics, 3; indebtedness to Justin McCarthy, 6; literary work with Justin McCarthy, 13; visits to 'Fitzurseham,' 39; tour to the United States, 51; meeting with Parnell, 52; arrival in America and impres-

sions, 56; Boston, 64; return to England, 65; the Backwoodsman, 86; at Royat and in Switzerland, 113; letter to Justin McCarthy urging him to resign, 114; an opinion of Mrs. Praed's American sketches, 141; a play produced at the Opéra Comique, 144; trouble with Mr. Bentley over *The Rebel Rose*, 146; article on Jacobite observance of anniversary of King Charles I's death, 146; dramatic work, 162; at Cannes, 199, 207; in Algiers, 209; rebuked in religious journals for a Sunday party, 243; a dream, 248; an article on literary women, 276; again in the south, 277; excursions with Justin McCarthy, 287; at Woodlands, 293, 314, 315, 320; a conversation about political affairs with Justin McCarthy, 328; at Cannes, 332; death of Mrs. Praed's father, 347; a book by, 367; the heroine of *The Scourge Stick* criticised by Justin McCarthy, 375, 378; a trip to Australia, 382; in Ceylon, 385; in a shipwreck, 396, 397; at Cannes, 408; a suggestion for a book to be called *Impressions of the Eighties*, 422; visits to Westgate, 432, 435, 437; an Australian experience, 435; a visit to Folkestone, 445
Praed, Geoffrey, 427
Prime Minister, the, in *The Bauble Shop*, a play by H. A. Jones, 350, 351

Quain, Dr., 229
'Quetta,' the wreck of the, 397

Rabusson, Henry, a novel by, 195
Raffalovitch, André, 22
Raffalovitch, Miss, married to William O'Brien, 244
Raikes, Mrs., 352
Reade, Winwood, 236
Rebel Rose, The, 35, 36, 44; difficulties about publication, 51, 52; 67, 80, 88, 144, 146, 148, 153, 162, 173, 186, 230, 239, 282, 359, 389, 390, 391
Red Diamonds, a story by Justin McCarthy, 344, 353
Redmond, John, 395, 444
Reed, Sir Edward, revolt of, 337, 339
Rehan, Ada, 155, 159; performance in Paris, 160; in *Last Words*, 300; lays the foundation-stone of Daly's new theatre, 304
Reid, Robert, 242, 254
Reid, Sir Wemyss, 218
Reincarnation, 422
Réjane, Mme., 381
Reminiscences, a book by Justin McCarthy, 408, 424, 426, 432
Renunciation, 369
Richter, Jean Paul, 23, 407
Riddle Ring, The, a novel by Justin McCarthy, 367, 381, 389
Rideing, Mr., editor of the *North American Review*, 214, 215, 216, 218, 285, 299
Ridley, Sir Matthew White, 395
Right Honourable, The, a novel by Mrs. Praed and Justin McCarthy, 9, 10, 14, 16, 19, 21, 23, 31, 38, 88, 145, 151, 152, 295, 305, 367, 377, 398, 408
Ripon, Lord, on Home Rule, 340; on the cause of Mr. Gladstone's resignation, 376
Rival Princess, The (see *The Rebel Rose*)
Robbery under Arms, 214, 222
Robert Macaire (Irving's), 152
Robertson, J. Forbes, in *Romeo and Juliet*, 406
Robinson, Sir James, 227
Robinson, Sir John, 105
'Rolf Boldrewood,' 214
Rollit, Sir Albert, 237
Rome, 410
Rome under the Cæsars, materials for a work on, 423
Romeo and Juliet, Mr. Forbes Robertson in, 406
Roose, Doctor Robson, 101, 113, 116, 142, 148, 150, 185, 205, 231, 235, 286, 291, 292, 294, 313, 315, 316, 318, 390
Rosebery, Lord, a walk and talk with, 138, 156; 'next leader of the Liberal Party,' 203; on Home Rule, 340; as successor to Mr. Gladstone, 375, 376; a defeat at Forfar, 388
Rossendale, an election victory at, 309

Rossetti, Dante Gabriel, his grave, 165, 167; an atheist or not an atheist, 167; his grave re-visited, 304, 366
Roundell, Mr., 136
Routledge, Mr., contests the Ayr Boroughs, 227; loses election by a dinner to Toole, 232
'Row' in the House of Commons, the, 365
Rushden Rectory, 246
Ruskin, John, 410
Russell, Sir Charles (Lord Russell of Killowen), 48, 50, 145, 175, 183, 205, 216, 226, 327, 333
Russell, G. W. E., 229, 291
Russell, Lady, 136, 161, 211, 257, 335, 338, 380, 410
Russell, Lady Agatha, 161, 211, 432
Russell, Sir William Howard, 399

St James' Gazette, attitude towards Parnell, 202; attack on Justin McCarthy, 220
Sala, G. A., witnesses Pigott's confession, 175
Salisbury, Lord, resignation of, in 1886, 31; attitude towards Home Rule, 47, 118; shakes hands with Justin McCarthy, 189
Sandhurst, Lady, 307
Sartoris, Mr. and Mrs. Frederick, 1, 6, 105, 125, 143, 434
Saunderson, Colonel, and the 'row' in the House, 365
Schnadhorst, Mr., 111, 275
Scottish Home Rule, 232
Scourge Stick, The, a novel by Mrs. Praed, 208; Justin McCarthy's criticisms of, 374, 378
Sea, Justin McCarthy's love for the, 419
Selborne, Lord, 215
Sensation Novel, Our, a book by Justin McCarthy, 222, 298
Seton, Lady, 217
Sexton, Mr., 93, 96, 120, 157, 269, 271, 275, 278, 311, 323, 330, 340, 348, 349, 354, 359, 362
Shakespeare, 101, 124, 139, 241, 270, 366, 423, 444
Shaw, Sir Eyre, 340
Shipwrecks, 396, 397
Shooting Star, The, a novel planned in collaboration, but discontinued, 196
Silence, a volume by Mary E. Wilkins, 425
Sinnett, Mr. and Mrs., 85, 199; a lecture on 'The Astral Plane,' 204, 232
Smith, Sir Charles Euan, 335
Smith, W. H., on the reported death of the German Emperor, 148
Social atmosphere of the eighties, 84
Soothsaying, 305
Sophocles, 421
Sopwith, Mrs., a 'private theatrical' performance, 340
Soul of Countess Adrian, The, a novel by Mrs. Praed, 251, 379
Speakership, the, 395, 396
Spencer, Earl, 7, 33, 95, 264, 291, 340, 433
Stanhope, Edward, 369
Stanhope, Philip, 127
Stanley, Sir H. M., 242
Stansfield, J., 34
Statius, the *Thebais* of, 423
Statue of the Commander, The, 323
Stead, W. T., receives a telegram from Parnell, 107; 284; projects *The Hundred of Great Britain*, 384
Steel, Mrs. F. A., 414
Steele, Lady, 349
Steele's 'noblest thing concerning a woman,' 128
Stentor, Justin McCarthy's comparison of himself with, 238
Story of Mr. Gladstone's Life, The, 410, 411, 412, 420, 422, 424
Stuart, Professor, 102, 148
Subjects of the Day, a new review, 247
Suetonius, 423
Sullivan, Dr., 304
Summers, William, premature death of, 346
Swedish literature, modern, 316

Tacitus, 423
Tales of the Genii, 316
Tanner, Dr., 313, 316
Teck, the late Duke of, and King Edward, 159
Temple, Sir Richard, 109
Tennant, Margot, 278
'Terrace,' the, of the House of Commons, 4, 127
Terry, Ellen, 217, 436
Thackeray's, 'Wait till you come to forty years,' 17

Thompson, Sir Henry, 301
Thomson, Courtauld, a story told by, 301
Thought-reading, 330
Three Dream-Heroines, a fantasy by Justin McCarthy, 409
Tillotsons', a newspaper syndicate, 284, 344, 355, 367
Times, The (newspaper), 90, 91, 175, 216, 220, 343
Tone, Wolfe, 368, a review of the autobiography of, 369
Toole, John L., 216, 221, 232, 319
Tree, Sir H. B., in *Hamlet*, 311
Trevelyan, Sir George, 34
Troy, N.Y., 74
Turner, Colonel, at the head of the police in Cork, 271
Tweedmouth, Lord, 383

UNITED IRELAND, a telegram to, 263
United States, the, 51–65, 416
Unwin, Fisher, 400
'Upper Boxes,' viewing life from the, 270, 393

VANBRUGH, Violet, 163, 243
Vanitas, a book by Violet Paget, 337
Vaughan, Cardinal, 411
Venice, 410
Verestchagin, the Russian painter, 136
Villiers, Charles, the earliest leader of the Free Trade movement, 121
Virgil, 423
Volcano, The, première of, 286
Voyage Imaginaire, Le, Béranger's poem, 416, 417

WADDINGTON, Sir Samuel, 353
Waite, Mr., a portrait by, 442
Walker, Mr., of *The Times*, on Fenianism, 102
Walker, London, a play by J. M. Barrie, 319
Wallace, General Lew, 82
Walsh, Dr., opposition to Parnell, 262
Ward, Généviève, 217, 301
Ward, Leslie, 165
Wardle, Mr., 135
Wedderburn, Sir William, 204
Wentworth, Lord, a grandson of Byron, 199, 310
Westgate, and the sunsets at Westgate, 419
Westminster, the Duke of, 220
Westminster Budget, 389
Westminster Gazette started, 350
Whistler, J. McN., 160, 182
Whitbread, Mr., defends Parnell, 104
Whiteing, Richard, 105, 182; author of a 'leader' on *The Grey River*, 204; at Justin McCarthy's bedside, 293
Whittredge, Mr., Justin McCarthy's touring agent, 66, 78, 81, 198
Wilde, Oscar, a play by, 311
'Wild-West'-erners in London, 103, 117, 123
Wilkins, Mary E., some New England Stories by, 293, 338, 348, 425
Williamson, Mr. and Mrs. C. N., 193, 228
Wilson, Mr., doorkeeper of the House of Commons, 359
With the Immortals, 172
Wolff, Sir Henry, 311
Women-workers, a meeting to aid, 217
Woodlands, a house occupied by Mrs. Praed, 293, 300, 314, 315, 320, 328, 354, 355, 364, 378
Wreckage, a book by Hubert Crackanthorpe, 358
Wyndham, Sir Charles, 88, 350; praises *The Right Honourable*, 367

'YEARNING EIGHTIES,' the, 84

ZOLA, a novel by, 348

THE END

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